

2008-Eckhart Tolle Oprah A New Earth Audiobook Podcast Chapter08

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 26:16)

CHAPTER VIII THE DISCOVERY OF INNER SPACE According to an ancient Sufi story, there lived a king in some Middle Eastern land who was continuously torn between happiness and despondency. The slightest thing would cause him great upset or provoke an intense reaction, and his happiness would quickly turn into disappointment and despair. A time came when the king finally got tired of himself and of life, and he began to seek a way out.

He sent for a wise man who lived in his kingdom, and who was reputed to be enlightened. When the wise man came, the king said to him, "I want to be like you. Can you give me something that will bring balance, serenity and wisdom into my life?"

"I will pay any price you ask." The wise man said, "I may be able to help you, but the price is so great that your entire kingdom would not be sufficient payment for it. Therefore it will be a gift to you if you will honour it." The king gave his assurances, and the wise man left. A few weeks later he returned and handed the king an ornate box carved in jade.

The king opened the box and found a simple gold ring inside. Some letters were inscribed on the ring. The inscription read, "This too will pass." "What is the meaning of this?" asked the king. The wise man said, "Wear this ring always. Whatever happens, before you call it good or bad, touch this ring and read the inscription. That way you will always be at peace."

"This too will pass." What is it about these simple words that make them so powerful? Looking at it superficially, it would seem, while those words may provide some comfort in a bad situation, they would also diminish the enjoyment of the good things in life. "Don't be too happy, because it won't last." This seems to be what they are saying when applied in a situation that is perceived as good. The full import of these words becomes clear when we consider them in the context of two other stories that we encountered earlier. The story of the Zen Master, whose only response was always "Is that so?", shows the good that comes through inner nonresistance to events, that is to say, being at one with what happens. The story of the man, whose comment was invariably a laconic "maybe", illustrates the wisdom of nonjudgment.

And the story of the ring points to the fact of impermanence which, when recognized, leads to nonattachment. Nonresistance, nonjudgment and nonattachment are the three aspects of true freedom and enlightened living. Those words inscribed on the ring are not telling you that you should not enjoy the good in your life, nor are they merely meant to provide some comfort in times of suffering.

They have a deeper purpose ♦ to make you aware of the fleetingness of every situation, which is due to the transience of all forms, good or bad. When you become aware of the transience of all forms, your attachment to them lessens and you disidentify from them to some extent. Being detached does not mean that you cannot enjoy the good that the world has to offer.

In fact, you enjoy it more. Once you see and accept the transience of all things and the inevitability of change, you can enjoy the pleasures of the world while they last, without fear of loss or anxiety about the future. When you are detached, you gain a higher vantage point from which to view the events in your life, instead of being trapped inside them.

You become like an astronaut who sees the planet earth surrounded by the vastness of space and realizes a paradoxical truth ♦ the earth is precious and at the same time insignificant. The recognition that this, too, will pass brings detachment, and with detachment another dimension comes into your life ♦ inner space. Through detachment, as well as non-judgment and inner non-resistance, you gain access to that dimension.

When you are no longer totally identified with forms, consciousness, who you are, becomes freed from its imprisonment in form. This freedom is the arising of inner space. It comes as a stillness, a subtle peace deep within you, even in the face of something seemingly bad.

This, too, will pass. Suddenly there is space around the event. There is also space around the emotional highs and lows, even around pain.

And above all, there is space between your thoughts. And from that space emanates a peace that is not of this world, because this world is form, and the peace is space. This is the peace of God.

You can enjoy and honor the things of this world without giving them an importance and significance they don't have. You can participate in the dance of creation and be active without attachment to outcome and without placing unreasonable demands upon the world. Fulfill me, make me happy, make me feel safe, tell me who I am.

The world cannot give you those things, and when you no longer have such expectations, all self-created suffering comes to an end. All such suffering is due to an overvaluation of form and an unawareness of the dimension of inner space. When that dimension is present in your life, you can enjoy things, experiences and the pleasures of the senses without losing yourself in them, without inner attachment to them, that is to say, without becoming addicted to the world.

The words ♦This, too, will pass♦ are pointers towards reality. In pointing to the

impermanence of all forms, by implication, they are also pointing to the eternal. Only the eternal in you can recognize the impermanent as impermanent.

When the dimension of space is lost or rather not known, the things of the world assume an absolute importance, a seriousness and heaviness that in truth they do not have. When the world is not viewed from the perspective of the formless, it becomes a threatening place, and ultimately a place of despair. The Old Testament prophet must have felt this when he wrote ♦All things are full of weariness, a man cannot utter it♦, Object Consciousness and Space Consciousness Most people♦s lives are cluttered up with things, material things, things to do, things to think about.

Their lives are like the history of humanity, which Winston Churchill defined as ♦one damn thing after another.♦ Their minds are filled up with a clutter of thoughts, one thought after another. This is the dimension of Object Consciousness that is many people♦s predominant reality, and that is why their lives are so out of balance. Object Consciousness needs to be balanced by Space Consciousness for sanity to return to our planet and for humanity to fulfill its destiny.

The arising of Space Consciousness is the next stage in the evolution of humanity. Space Consciousness means that in addition to being conscious of things, which always comes down to sense perceptions, thoughts and emotions, there is an undercurrent of awareness. Awareness implies that you are not only conscious of things, objects, but you are also conscious of being conscious.

If you can sense an alert inner stillness in the background while things happen in the foreground, that♦s it. This dimension is there in everyone, but most people are completely unaware of it. Sometimes I point to it by saying, ♦Can you feel your own presence?♦ Space Consciousness represents not only freedom from ego, but also from dependency on the things of this world, from materialism and materiality.

It is the spiritual dimension which alone can give transcendent and true meaning to this world. Whenever you are upset about an event, a person or a situation, the real cause is not the event, person or situation, but a loss of true perspective that only space can provide. You are trapped in object consciousness, unaware of the timeless inner space of consciousness itself.

The words ♦This too will pass♦ when used as a pointer can restore awareness of that dimension to you. Another pointer to the truth in you is contained in the following statement, ♦I am never upset for the reason I think.♦ Falling below and rising above thought. When you are very tired, you may become more peaceful, more relaxed than in your usual state.

This is because thinking is subsiding, and so you can♦t remember your mind-made problematic self anymore. You are moving towards sleep. When you drink alcohol or take

certain drugs, provided they don't trigger your pain body, you may also feel more relaxed, more carefree, and perhaps more alive for a while.

You may start singing and dancing, which since ancient times are expressions of the joy of life. Because you are less burdened by your mind, you can glimpse the joy of being. Perhaps this is the reason alcohol is also called "spirit." But there's a high price to pay—unconsciousness. Instead of rising above thought, you have fallen below it. A few more drinks, and you will have regressed to the vegetable realm. Space consciousness has little to do with being "spaced out." Both states are beyond thought. This they have in common. The fundamental difference, however, is that in the former you rise above thought, in the latter you fall below it. One is the next step in the evolution of human consciousness, the other a regression to a stage we left behind aeons ago.

Watching television is the favorite leisure activity, or rather non-activity, for millions of people around the world. The average American, by the time he is sixty years old, will have spent fifteen years staring at the TV screen. In many other countries the figures are similar.

Many people find watching TV relaxing. Observe yourself closely and you will find that the longer the screen remains the focus of your attention, the more your thought activity becomes suspended, and for long periods you are watching the talk show, game show, sitcom, or even commercials, with almost no thought being generated by your mind. Not only do you not remember your problems anymore, but you become temporarily free of yourself.

And what could be more relaxing than that? So does TV watching create inner space? Does it cause you to be present?

Unfortunately it does not. Although for long periods your mind may not be generating any thoughts, it has linked into the thought activity of the television show. It has linked up with the TV version of the collective mind, and is thinking its thoughts.

Your mind is inactive only in the sense that it is not producing thoughts. It is, however, continuously absorbing thoughts and images that come through the TV screen. This induces a trance-like passive state of heightened susceptibility, not unlike hypnosis.

That is why it lends itself to manipulation of public opinion, as politicians and special interest groups, as well as advertisers, know, and will pay millions of dollars to catch you in that state of receptive unawareness. They want their thoughts to become your thoughts, and usually they succeed. So when watching television, the tendency is for you to fall below thought, not rise above it.

Television has this in common with alcohol and certain other drugs. While it provides some relief from your mind, you again pay a high price. Loss of consciousness.

Like those drugs, it too has a strong addictive quality. You reach for the remote control to switch off, and instead find yourself going through all the channels. Half an hour or an hour later, you are still watching, still going through the channels.

The off button is the only one your finger seems unable to press. You are still watching, usually not because anything of interest has caught your attention, but precisely because there is nothing of interest to watch. Once you are hooked, the more trivial, the more meaningless it is, the more addictive it becomes.

If it were interesting, thought-provoking, it would stimulate your mind into thinking for itself again, which is more conscious and therefore preferable to a TV-induced trance. Your attention would therefore no longer be totally held captive by the images on the screen. The content of the program, if there is a certain quality to it, can to some extent counteract and sometimes even undo the hypnotic, mind-numbing effect of the medium of television.

There are some programs that have been extremely helpful to many people, have changed their lives for the better, opened their heart, made them more conscious. Even some comedy shows, although they may be about nothing in particular, can be unintentionally spiritual by showing a caricature version of human folly and the ego. They teach us not to take anything too seriously, to approach life in a light-hearted way, and above all, they teach by making us laugh.

Laughter is extraordinarily liberating as well as healing. Most of television, however, is as yet controlled by people who are totally controlled by the ego. And so the TV's hidden agenda becomes control of you by putting you to sleep, that is to say, making you unconscious.

Yet there is enormous and still largely unexplored potential in the medium of television. Avoid watching programs and commercials that assault you with a rapid succession of images that change every two or three seconds or less. Excessive TV watching, and those programs in particular, are largely responsible for attention-deficit disorder, a mental dysfunction now affecting millions of children worldwide.

A short attention span makes all your perceptions and relationships shallow and unsatisfying. Whatever you do, whatever action you perform in that state, lacks quality, because quality requires attention. Frequent and prolonged TV watching not only makes you unconscious, it also induces passivity and drains you of energy.

Therefore, rather than watching at random, choose the programs you want to see. Whenever you remember to do so, feel the aliveness inside your body as you watch. Alternatively, be aware of your breathing from time to time.

Look away from the screen at regular intervals so that it does not completely take

possession of your visual sense. Don't turn up the volume any higher than necessary so that the TV doesn't overwhelm you on the auditory level. Use the mute button during commercials.

Make sure you don't go to sleep immediately after switching off the set, or, even worse, fall asleep with the set still on. Space between thoughts is probably already arising sporadically in your life, and you may not even know it. A consciousness mesmerized by experiences, and conditioned to identify exclusively with form, that is to say, object consciousness, finds it at first almost impossible to become aware of space.

This ultimately means that you cannot become aware of yourself because you are always aware of something else. You are continuously distracted by form. Even when you seem to be aware of yourself, you have made yourself into an object, a thought form, and so what you are aware of is a thought, not yourself.

When you hear of inner space, you may start seeking it and, because you are seeking it as if you were looking for an object or for an experience, you cannot find it. This is the dilemma of all those who are seeking spiritual realization or enlightenment. Hence Jesus said, The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed, nor will they say, Lo, here it is, or, There.

For behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you. If you are not spending all of your waking life in discontent, worry, anxiety, depression, despair, or consumed by other negative states, if you are able to enjoy simple things like listening to the sound of the rain or the wind, if you can see the beauty of clouds moving across the sky, or be alone at times without feeling lonely or needing the mental stimulus of entertainment, if you find yourself treating a complete stranger with heartfelt kindness, without wanting anything from him or her, it means that a space has opened up, no matter how briefly, in the otherwise incessant stream of thinking that is the human mind. When this happens, there is a sense of well-being, of alive peace, even though it may be subtle.

The intensity will vary from a perhaps barely noticeable background sense of contentment to what the ancient sages of India called ananda, the bliss of being. Because you have been conditioned to pay attention only to form, you are probably not aware of it except indirectly. For example, there is a common element in the ability to see beauty, to appreciate simple things, to enjoy your own company, or to relate to other people with loving kindness.

This common element is a sense of contentment, peace, and aliveness that is the invisible background without which these experiences would not be possible. Whenever there is beauty, kindness, the recognition of the goodness of simple things in your life, look for the background to that experience within yourself. But don't look for it as if you were looking for something.

You cannot pin it down and say, now I have it, or grasp it mentally and define it in some way. It is like the cloudless sky. It has no form.

It is space. It is stillness, the sweetness of being, and infinitely more than these words, which are only pointers. When you are able to sense it directly within yourself, it deepens.

So, when you appreciate something simple, a sound, a sight, a touch, when you see beauty, when you feel loving kindness towards another, sense the inner spaciousness that is the source and background to that experience. Many poets and sages throughout the ages have observed that true happiness, I call it the joy of being, is found in simple, simple, seemingly unremarkable things. Most people, in their restless search for something significant to happen to them, continuously miss the insignificant, which may not be insignificant at all.

The philosopher Nietzsche, in a rare moment of deep stillness, wrote, For happiness, how little suffices for happiness! The least thing precisely, the gentlest thing the lightest thing, a lizard's rustling, a breath, a whisk, an eye-glance, little makes up the best happiness. Be still.

Why is it the least thing that makes up the best happiness? Because true happiness is not caused by the thing or event, although this is how it first appears. The thing or event is so subtle, so unobtrusive, that it takes up only a small part of your consciousness, and the rest is inner space, consciousness itself unobstructed by form.

Inner space consciousness and who you are in your essence are one and the same. In other words, the form of little things leaves room for inner space, and it is from inner space, the unconditioned consciousness itself, that true happiness, the joy of being, emanates. To be aware of little, quiet things, however, you need to be quiet inside.

A hiding place of a degree of alertness is required. Be still. Look.

Listen. Be present. Here's another way of finding inner space.

Become conscious of being conscious. Say or think, I am, and add nothing to it. Be aware of the stillness that follows the I am.

Sense your presence. The naked, unveiled, unclothed beingness. It is untouched by young or old, rich or poor, good or bad, or any other attributes.

It is the spacious womb of all creation, all form.

[Speaker 3] (26:19 - 26:21)

End of Disc Six Him?

[Speaker 1] (26:23 - 1:04:40)

A Zen Master was walking in silence with one of his disciples along a mountain trail. When they came to an ancient cedar tree, they sat down under it for a simple meal of some rice and vegetables. After the meal, the disciple, a young monk who had not yet found the key to the mystery of Zen, broke the silence by asking the master, Master, how do I enter Zen?

He was, of course, inquiring how to enter the state of consciousness which is Zen. The master remained silent. Almost five minutes passed while the disciple anxiously waited for an answer.

He was about to ask another question when the master suddenly spoke. Do you hear the sound of that mountain stream? The disciple had not been aware of any mountain stream.

He had been too busy thinking about the meaning of Zen. Now, as he began to listen for the sound, his noisy mind subsided. At first he heard nothing.

Then his thinking gave way to heightened alertness, and suddenly he did hear the hardly perceptible murmur of a small stream in the far distance. Yes, I can hear it now, he said. The master raised his finger and, with a look in his eyes that in some way was both fierce and gentle, said, Enter Zen from there.

The disciple was stunned. It was his first Satori, a flash of enlightenment. He knew what Zen was without knowing what it was that he knew.

They continued on their journey in silence. The disciple was amazed at the aliveness of the world around him. He experienced everything as if for the first time.

Gradually, however, he started thinking again. The alert stillness became covered up again by mental noise. And before long he had another question.

Master, he said, I've been thinking. What would you have said if I hadn't been able to hear the mountain stream? The master stopped, looked at him, raised his finger and said, Enter Zen from there.

Right action. The ego asks, How can I make this situation fulfill my needs? Or, How can I get to some other situation that will fulfill my needs?

Presence. Presence is a state of inner spaciousness. When you are present, you ask, How do I respond to the needs of this situation, of this moment?

In fact, you don't even need to ask the question. You are still, alert, open to what is. You bring a new dimension into the situation.

Space. Then you look and you listen. Thus you become one with the situation.

When instead of reacting against a situation, you merge with it, the solution arises out of the situation itself. Actually, it is not you, the person, who is looking and listening, but the alert stillness itself. Then, if action is possible or necessary, you take action or rather, right action happens through you.

Right action is action that is appropriate to the whole. When the action is accomplished, the alert spacious stillness remains. There is nobody who raises his arms in a gesture of triumph, shouting a defiant, Yay!

There is no one who says, Look, I did that. All creativity comes out of inner spaciousness. Once the creation has happened and something has come into form, you have to be vigilant so that the notion of me or mine does not arise.

If you take credit for what you accomplished, the ego has returned and the spaciousness has become obscured. Outnaming. Most people are only peripherally aware of the world that surrounds them, especially if their surroundings are familiar.

The voice in the head absorbs the greater part of their attention. Some people feel more alive when they travel and visit unfamiliar places or foreign countries, because at those times sense-perception, experiencing, takes up more of their consciousness than thinking. They become more present.

Others remain completely possessed by the voice in the head even then. Their perceptions and experiences are distorted by instant judgments. They haven't really gone anywhere.

Only their body is travelling, while they remain where they have always been—in their head. This is most people's reality. As soon as something is perceived, it is named, interpreted, compared with something else, liked, disliked, or called good or bad by the phantom self, the ego.

They are impresent in thought-forms, in object consciousness. You do not awaken spiritually until the compulsive and unconscious naming ceases. Or at least you become aware of it and thus are able to observe it as it happens.

It is through this constant naming that the ego remains in place as the unobserved mind. Whenever it ceases, and even when you just become aware of it, there is inner space, and you are not possessed by the mind anymore. Choose an object close to you—a pen, a chair, a cup, a plant—and explore it visually, that is to say, look at it with great interest, almost curiosity.

Avoid any objects with strong personal associations that remind you of the past, such as where you bought it, who gave it to you, and so on. Also avoid anything that has writing

on it, such as a book or a bottle. It would stimulate thought.

Without straining, relaxed but alert, give your complete attention to the object, every detail of it. If thoughts arise, don't get involved in them. It is not the thoughts you are interested in, but the act of perception itself.

Can you take the thinking out of the perceiving? Can you look without the voice in your head, commenting, drawing conclusions, comparing, or trying to figure something out? After a couple of minutes or so, let your gaze wander around the room or wherever you are, your alert attention lighting up each thing that it rests upon.

Then listen to any sounds that may be present. Listen to them in the same way as you looked at the things around you. Some sounds may be natural—water, wind, birds—while others are man-made.

Some may be pleasant, others unpleasant. However, don't differentiate between good and bad. Allow each sound to be as it is, without interpretation.

Here, too, relaxed but alert attention is the key. When you look and listen in this way, you may become aware of a subtle and at first perhaps hardly noticeable sense of calm. Some people feel it as a stillness in the background.

Others call it peace. When consciousness is no longer totally absorbed by thinking, some of it remains in its formless, unconditioned, original state. This is inner space.

Who is the experiencer? What you see and hear, taste, touch and smell are, of course, sense-objects. They are what you experience.

But who is the subject, the experiencer? If you now say, for example, well, of course I, Jane Smith, senior accountant, forty-five years old, divorced, mother of two, American, am the subject, the experiencer, you are mistaken. Jane Smith and whatever else becomes identified with the mental concept of Jane Smith are all objects of experience, not the experiencing subject.

Every experience has three possible ingredients, sense-perceptions, thoughts or mental images and emotions. Jane Smith, senior accountant, forty-five years old, mother of two, divorced, American, these are all thoughts and therefore part of what you experience the moment you think these thoughts. They and whatever else you can say and think about yourself are objects, not the subject.

They are experience, not the experiencer. You can add a thousand more definitions, thoughts, of who you are, and by doing so will certainly increase the complexity of the experience of yourself, as well as your psychiatrist's income, but in this way you will not end up with the subject, the experiencer, who is prior to all experience, but without whom there would be no experience, the experiencer. You are, and who are you?

Consciousness, and what is consciousness? This question cannot be answered. The moment you answer it, you have falsified it, made it into another object.

Consciousness, the traditional word for which is spirit, cannot be known in the normal sense of the word, and seeking it is futile. All knowing is within the realm of duality, subject and object, the knower and the known. The subject, the I, the knower without which nothing could be known, perceived, thought or felt, must remain for ever unknowable.

This is because the I has no form. Only forms can be known, and yet without the formless dimension the world of form could not be. It is the luminous space in which the world arises and subsides.

That space is the life that I am. It is timeless. I am timeless, eternal.

What happens in that space is relative and temporary, pleasure and pain, gain and loss, birth and death. The greatest impediment to the discovery of inner space, the greatest impediment to finding the experiencer, is to become so enthralled by the experience that you lose yourself in it. It means consciousness is lost in its own dream.

You get taken in by every thought, every emotion and every experience to such a degree that you are in fact in a dreamlike state. This has been the normal state of humanity for thousands of years. Although you cannot know consciousness, you can become conscious of it as yourself.

You can sense it directly in any situation, no matter where you are. You can sense it here and now, as your very presence, the inner space in which the words on this page are perceived and become thoughts. It is the underlying I am.

The words you are reading and thinking are the foreground, and the I am is the substratum, the underlying background to every experience, thought, feeling. The Breath Discover inner space by creating gaps in the stream of thinking. Without those gaps, your thinking becomes repetitive, uninspired, devoid of any creative spark, which is how it still is for most people on the planet.

You don't need to be concerned with the duration of those gaps. A few seconds is good enough. Gradually they will lengthen by themselves without any effort on your part.

More important than their length is to bring them in frequently so that your daily activities and your stream of thinking become interspersed with space. Someone recently showed me the annual prospectus of a large spiritual organization. When I looked through it, I was impressed by the wide choice of interesting seminars and workshops.

It reminded me of the Smörgåsbord, one of those Scandinavian buffets where you can

take your pick from a huge variety of enticing dishes. The person asked me whether I could recommend one or two courses. I don't know, I said, they all look so interesting.

But I do know this, I added. Be aware of your breathing as often as you are able, whenever you remember. Do that for one year, and it will be more powerfully transformative than attending all of these courses.

And it's free. Being aware of your breathing takes attention away from thinking and creates space. It is one way of generating consciousness.

Although the fullness of consciousness is already there as the unmanifested, we are here to bring consciousness into this dimension. Be aware of your breathing. Notice the sensation of the breath.

Feel the air moving in and out of your body. Notice how the chest and abdomen expand and contract slightly with the in and out breath. One conscious breath is enough to make some space where before there was the uninterrupted succession of one thought after another.

One conscious breath, two or three would be even better, taken many times a day, is an excellent way of bringing space into your life. Even if you meditated on your breathing for two hours or more, which some people do, one breath is all you ever need to be aware of, indeed ever can be aware of. The rest is memory or anticipation, which is to say thought.

Breathing isn't really something that you do, but something that you witness as it happens. Breathing happens by itself. The intelligence within the body is doing it.

All you have to do is watch it happening. There is no strain or effort involved. Also, notice the brief cessation of the breath, particularly the still point at the end of the out breath, before you start breathing in again.

Many people's breath is unnaturally shallow. The more you are aware of the breath, the more its natural depth will re-establish itself. Because breath has no form as such, it has since ancient times been equated with spirit, the formless one life.

God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. Breathing, Atman, is derived from the ancient Indian Sanskrit word Atman, meaning the indwelling divine spirit or God within. The fact that breath has no form is one of the reasons why breath awareness is an extremely effective way of bringing space into your life, of generating consciousness.

It is an excellent meditation object precisely because it is not an object, has no shape or form. The other reason is that breath is one of the most subtle and seemingly insignificant phenomena, the least thing that according to Nietzsche makes up the best

happiness. Whether or not you practice breath awareness as an actual formal meditation is up to you.

Formal meditation, however, is no substitute for bringing space consciousness into everyday life. Being aware of your breath forces you into the present moment, the key to all inner transformation. Whenever you are conscious of the breath you are absolutely present.

You may also notice that you cannot think and be aware of your breathing. Conscious breathing stops your mind. But far from being in a trance or half asleep, you are fully awake and highly alert.

You are not falling below thinking, but rising above it. And if you look more closely you will find that those two things, coming fully into the present moment and ceasing thinking without loss of consciousness, are actually one and the same, the arising of space consciousness. Addictions A longstanding compulsive behavior pattern may be called an addiction.

And an addiction lives inside you as a quasi-entity or sub-personality, an energy field that periodically takes you over completely. It even takes over your mind, the voice in your head, which then becomes the voice of the addiction. It may be saying, "You've had a rough day, you deserve a treat."

Why deny yourself the only pleasure that is left in your life? And so, if you are identified with the internal voice due to lack of awareness, you find yourself walking to the fridge and reaching for that rich chocolate cake. At other times, the addiction may bypass the thinking mind completely and you suddenly find yourself puffing on a cigarette or holding a drink. "How did that get into my hand?" Taking the cigarette out of the packet and lighting it, or pouring yourself a drink were actions performed in complete unconsciousness.

If you have a compulsive behavior pattern such as smoking, overeating, drinking, TV watching, internet addiction, or whatever it may be, this is what you can do. When you notice the compulsive need arising in you, stop and take three conscious breaths. This generates awareness.

Then for a few minutes be aware of the compulsive urge itself as an energy field inside you. Consciously feel that need to physically or mentally ingest or consume a certain substance, or the desire to act out some form of compulsive behavior. Then take a few more conscious breaths.

After that you may find that the compulsive urge has disappeared, for the time being. Or you may find that it still overpowers you and you cannot help but indulge or act it out again. Don't make it into a problem.

Make the addiction part of your awareness practice in the way described above. As awareness grows, addictive patterns will weaken and eventually dissolve. Remember, however, to catch any thoughts that justify the addictive behavior, sometimes with clever arguments, as they arise in your mind.

Ask yourself, "Who is talking here?" And you will realize the addiction is talking. As long as you know that, as long as you are present as the observer of your mind, it is less likely to trick you into doing what it wants. Inner Body Awareness Another simple but highly effective way of finding space in your life is closely linked to the breath.

You will find that by feeling the subtle flow of air in and out of the body, as well as the rise and fall of your chest and abdomen, you are also becoming aware of the inner body. Your attention may then shift from the breath to that felt aliveness within you, diffused throughout the body. Most people are so distracted by their thoughts, so identified with the voices in their heads, they can no longer feel the aliveness within them.

To be unable to feel the life that animates the physical body, the very life that you are, is the greatest deprivation that can happen to you. You then begin to look not only for substitutes for that natural state of well-being within, but also for something to cover up the continuous unease that you feel when you are not in touch with the aliveness that is always there, but usually overlooked. Some of the substitutes people seek out are drug-induced highs, sensory overstimulation such as excessively loud music, thrills or dangerous activities, or an obsession with sex.

Even drama in relationships is used as a substitute for that genuine sense of aliveness. The most sought-after cover-up for the continuous background unease are intimate relationships. A man or a woman who is going to make me happy.

It is, of course, also one of the most frequently experienced of all the let-downs. And when the unease surfaces again, people will usually blame their partner for it. Take two or three conscious breaths.

Now see if you can detect a subtle sense of aliveness that pervades your entire inner body. Within, so to speak. Sense briefly specific parts of your body.

Feel your hands, then your arms, feet and legs. Can you feel your abdomen, chest, neck and head? What about your lips?

Is there life in them? Then become aware again of the inner body as a whole. You may want to close your eyes initially for this practice.

And once you can feel your body, open your eyes, look around and continue to feel your body at the same time. Some readers may find there is no need to close their eyes. They can in fact feel their inner body as they read this.

Inner and Outer Space Your inner body is not solid but spacious. It is not your physical form but the life that animates the physical form. It is the intelligence that created and sustains the body.

Simultaneously coordinating hundreds of different functions of such extraordinary complexity that the human mind can only understand a tiny fraction of it. When you become aware of it, what is really happening is that the intelligence is becoming aware of itself. It is the elusive life that no scientist has ever found because the consciousness that is looking for it is it.

Physicists have discovered that the apparent solidity of matter is an illusion created by our senses. This includes the physical body, which we perceive and think of as form, but 99.99% of which is actually empty space. This is how vast the space is between the atoms compared to their size, and there is as much space again within each atom.

The physical body is no more than a misperception of who you are. In many ways, it is a microcosmic version of outer space. To give you an idea of how vast the space is between celestial bodies, consider this.

Light traveling at a constant speed of 186,000 miles or 300,000 km per second takes just over one second to travel between the earth and the moon. Light from the sun takes about eight minutes to reach the earth. Light from our nearest neighbor in space, a star called Proxima Centauri, which is the sun that is closest to our own sun, travels for four and a half years before it reaches the earth.

This is how vast the space is that surrounds us. And then there's the intergalactic space, whose vastness defies all comprehension. Light from the galaxy closest to our own, the Andromeda galaxy, takes 2.4 million years to reach us. Isn't it amazing that your body is just as spacious as the universe? So your physical body, which is form, reveals itself as essentially formless when you go deeper into it. It becomes a doorway into inner space.

Although inner space has no form, it is intensely alive. That empty space is life in its fullness, the unmanifested source out of which all manifestation flows. The traditional word for that source is God.

Thoughts and words belong to the world of form. They cannot express the formless. So when you say, I can feel my inner body, that is a misperception created by thought.

What is really happening is that the consciousness that appears as the body, the consciousness that I am, is becoming conscious of itself. When I no longer confuse who I am with the temporary form of me, then the dimension of the limitless and the eternal, God, can express itself through me and guide me. It also frees me from dependency on form.

However, a purely intellectual recognition or belief that I am not this form does not help.

The all-important question is, at this moment, can I sense the presence of inner space, which really means, can I sense my own presence, or rather, the presence that I am? Or we can approach this truth using a different pointer.

Ask yourself, am I aware not only of what is happening at this moment, but also of the now itself, as the living, timeless inner space in which everything happens? Although this question seems to have nothing to do with the inner body, you may be surprised that by becoming aware of the space of now, you suddenly feel more alive inside. You are feeling the aliveness of the inner body, the aliveness that is an intrinsic part of the joy of being.

We have to enter the body to go beyond it and find out that we are not that. As much as possible in everyday life, use awareness of the inner body to create space. When waiting, when listening to someone, when pausing to look at the sky, a tree, a flower, your partner or child, feel the aliveness within at the same time.

This means part of your attention or consciousness remains formless, and the rest is available for the outer world to form. Whenever you inhabit your body in this way, it serves as an anchor for staying present in the now. It prevents you from losing yourself in thinking, in emotions or in external situations.

Perceive and experience, consciousness is born into form. It is reincarnating, into a thought, a feeling, a sense perception, an experience. The cycle of rebirth that Buddhists hope to get out of eventually is happening continuously, and it is only at this moment, through the power of now, that you can get out of it.

Through complete acceptance of the form of the now, you become internally aligned with space, which is the essence of now. Through acceptance, you become spacious inside. Aligned with space instead of form.

That brings true perspective and balance into your life. Noticing the gaps. Throughout the day there is a continuously changing succession of things that you see and hear.

In the first moment of seeing something or hearing a sound, and more so if it is unfamiliar, before the mind names or interprets what you see or hear, there is usually a gap of alert attention in which the perception occurs. That is the inner space. Its duration differs from person to person.

It is easy to miss because in many people those spaces are extremely short, perhaps only a second or less. This is what happens. A new sight or sound arises, and in the first moment of perception there is a brief cessation in the habitual stream of thinking.

Consciousness is diverted away from thought because it is required for sense perception. A very unusual sight or sound may leave you speechless, even inside, that is to say, bring about a longer gap. The frequency and duration of those spaces determine your

ability to enjoy life, to feel an inner connectedness with other human beings as well as nature.

It also determines the degree to which you are free of ego, because ego implies complete unawareness of the dimension of space. When you become conscious of these brief spaces as they happen naturally, they will lengthen, and as they do, you will experience with increasing frequency the joy of perceiving with little or no interference of thinking. The world around you then feels fresh, new and alive.

The more you perceive life through a mental screen of abstraction and conceptualization, the more lifeless and flat the world around you becomes. Lose yourself to find yourself. Inner space also arises whenever you let go of the need to emphasize your form identity.

That need is of the ego. It is not a true need. We have already touched briefly upon this.

Whenever you relinquish one of these behavior patterns, inner space emerges. You become more truly yourself. To the ego it will seem as if you were losing yourself, but the opposite is the case.

Jesus already taught that you need to lose yourself to find yourself. Whenever you let go of one of these patterns, you de-emphasize who you are on the level of form, and who you are beyond form emerges more fully. You become less, so you can be more.

Here are some ways in which people unconsciously try to emphasize their form identity. If you are alert enough, you may be able to detect some of these unconscious patterns within yourself. Demanding recognition for something you did and getting angry or upset if you don't get it.

Trying to get attention by talking about your problems, the story of your illnesses, or making a scene. Giving your opinion when nobody has asked for it and it makes no difference to the situation. Being more concerned with how the other person sees you than with the other person, which is to say, using other people for egoic reflection or as ego enhancers.

Trying to make an impression on others through possessions, knowledge, good looks, status, physical strength, and so on. Bringing about temporary ego inflation through angry reaction against something or someone. Taking things personally.

Feeling offended. Making yourself right and others wrong through futile mental or verbal complaining. Wanting to be seen or to appear important.

Once you have detected such a pattern within yourself, I suggest that you conduct an experiment. Find out what it feels like and what happens if you let go of that pattern. Just drop it and see what happens.

De-emphasizing who you are on the level of form is another way of generating consciousness. Discover the enormous power that flows through you into the world when you stop emphasizing your form identity. Stillness It has been said, stillness is the language God speaks, and everything else is a bad translation.

Stillness is really another word for space. Becoming conscious of stillness whenever we encounter it in our lives will connect us with the formless and timeless dimension within ourselves, that which is beyond thought, beyond ego. It may be the stillness that pervades the world of nature, or the stillness in your room in the early hours of the morning, or the silent gaps in between sounds.

Stillness has no form. That is why through thinking we cannot become aware of it. Thought is form.

Being aware of stillness means to be still. To be still is to be conscious without thought. You are never more essentially, more deeply yourself than when you are still.

When you are still, you are who you were before you temporarily assumed this physical and mental form called a person. You are also who you will be when the form dissolves. When you are still, you are who you are before beyond your temporal existence.

Consciousness. Unconditioned. Formless.

Eternal.

[Speaker 2] (1:05:04 - 1:05:32)

I feel that way and I'd like to again thank all of the students from around the world who are watching who are willing to awaken to the deeper meaning of your lives. Last week one of the things that Eckhart said that really struck me, you said that the opposite of death is not life. The opposite of death is birth.

Life has no opposite. So I think that's a good place to begin our moment of silence. Can we go into silence?

Life has no opposite.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:32 - 1:05:54)

Life has no opposite and perhaps as we go into the silence to feel yourself to be life rather than a person. A person is here only for a few years, but you are basically life experiencing itself temporarily as this person.

[Speaker 2] (1:05:54 - 1:05:56)

As this person, this personality, this ego.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:56 - 1:06:27)

But underlying it, you are life that is eternal. And so when you go into stillness, it's easy to sense that underneath the personality there is an aliveness, there is a presence, there is a consciousness that is timeless. And that's the life beyond the form of life that you are.

And that's why it has no opposite. That's right. Because it's forever.

Yes. And all the opposites only exist in the world of form.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:27 - 1:06:28)

In the world of form. I get that.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:29 - 1:06:42)

So as we go into the silence, into the stillness, let's see if we can just feel that in the background you are life. Or rather to say, I am life.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:43 - 1:06:43)

I am life.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:45 - 1:06:57)

Eternal, timeless. So we go into the stillness now and get in touch with that eternal life.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:37 - 1:07:45)

How wonderful. How wonderful to be able to get into touch with that. That's the inner space that you're talking about in Chapter 8.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:45 - 1:07:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:46 - 1:07:56)

Which is all about the discovery of inner space. That's what we're discussing tonight. Let's start with an overview of what this chapter is about.

What is inner space? What you just described?

[Speaker 1] (1:07:58 - 1:09:08)

I don't remember when this term first came to me. It must have been during a talk. I don't believe I used that term in The Power of Now.

I realized that most people's mind is full of stuff. Full of one thought after another. Full of continuously arising thoughts, emotions.

And their external life is full of things that need doing. One thing after another. One thing after another.

So I observed that in many people's lives there seems to be no space. There's only one thing after another. One thought after another.

One thing to do after another. One thing to be worried about after another. So I noticed this absence of space in human beings.

And really that inner space or spaciousness is what we could also call the stillness. But I use different terms because any one term limits it. When we talk about stillness, yes it is stillness, but it's much vaster than just stillness.

[Speaker 2] (1:09:08 - 1:09:10)

And vaster than being still.

[Speaker 1] (1:09:10 - 1:10:52)

Yes. So it's realizing that within you there's not only objects in your consciousness that continuously arise in your consciousness as sense perceptions. You experience things.

Sense perceptions arise continuously and each sense perception becomes an object in your consciousness. And then thoughts arise continuously and every thought becomes also an object that arises in your consciousness. Now, and this is what most people's lives consist of.

Continuously objects arising in consciousness. And I call that object consciousness. And that is what most people know.

And they also know themselves as an object in their consciousness. They have an image of who they are. They have certain opinions about who they are.

And so you become an object to yourself and that is the ego. So most, a mental object. You make yourself into a mental object.

And then you have a relationship with yourself as a mental object. It's a little bit insane, but it's normal. So now the incredible realization, this is where the spiritual dimension starts.

There is no spiritual dimension in object consciousness. You can have all kinds of interesting sounding or even religious sounding doctrines. If there is no space in you, spaciousness, where suddenly a gap arises in between thoughts.

If there's no spaciousness, then you haven't touched yet the spiritual dimension. And this book, I believe, is helping many people to find that space within.

[Speaker 2] (1:10:52 - 1:11:30)

You say on page 227, object consciousness needs to be balanced by space consciousness for sanity to return to our planet and for humanity to fulfill its destiny. The arising of space consciousness is the next stage in the evolution of humanity. Space consciousness means that in addition to being conscious of things, which always comes down to sense perceptions, thoughts and emotions, there is an undercurrent of awareness.

Awareness implies that you are not only conscious of things, but you're also conscious of being conscious. That's what you're talking about.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:30 - 1:12:14)

Yes. And that's an amazing thing. At first, if you just listen to being conscious of being conscious, the mind says, what does that mean?

You can only, you have to experience what that is to know what it means. So to be conscious of being conscious, for example, you can do it by looking at something, just if people haven't had a taste of this yet. For example, you look at a flower and you're conscious of the image, what you see, the sense perception.

Now, the question is, can you also be conscious of yourself as the perceiving presence, without which there would be no perception?

[Speaker 2] (1:12:15 - 1:12:15)

Correct.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:15 - 1:13:01)

And so, and that is the consciousness. So while you look at a flower, I'm saying flower because natural things can get you in touch with that dimension more easily. While you look at a flower, can you sense yourself as the presence that is looking, that is making the perception possible?

And then you have two dimensions. You're conscious of being conscious and you're conscious of what you're looking at. You live in two worlds at the same time.

And that brings in, that means in the background of your life, there is suddenly a vast, but intensely alive peace. Because being conscious of being conscious is very peaceful. That's where the true inner peace arises.

[Speaker 2] (1:13:02 - 1:13:13)

And that if you don't have that in your life, if you're not able to find that space between the thinking and the perception, perception, perception, you're not, then...

[Speaker 1] (1:13:13 - 1:13:24)

Then you lose yourself... In things. In things, you lose yourself in the world...

Yeah. And you lose yourself in your own mind. You continuously get drawn into every thought that arises.

[Speaker 2] (1:13:24 - 1:13:28)

Yeah. Well, one of the things, I know you met Dr. Jill Boat Taylor today.

[Speaker 11] (1:13:28 - 1:13:28)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:13:28 - 1:14:22)

And I interviewed her on my radio show, The Soul Series on XM Radio. And for those of you who have been enjoying our webcast with Eckhart Tolle, the Monday following our final webcast, I will have an interview with her on the web. Dr. Jill Boat Taylor is a brain scientist who had had a stroke several years ago. And during the process of having the stroke, in the middle of having the stroke, she lost her left, the left hemisphere of the brain, which was language and the ego and all of that. But the right hemisphere remained conscious and she was aware that she had lost the ego. And this sense of losing your mind that you have been talking to us about happened to her, was thrust upon her through the stroke.

[Speaker 1] (1:14:22 - 1:14:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:22 - 1:14:22)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:14:23 - 1:14:28)

So, I believe what happened to her was what we are talking about. She became conscious of consciousness itself.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:28 - 1:14:30)

She became conscious of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (1:14:30 - 1:14:30)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:30 - 1:14:31)

Through the stroke.

[Speaker 1] (1:14:31 - 1:14:58)

Yes. And really, when we say that, when we express it in language, and language always brings in a kind of duality. When I say, I become conscious of consciousness, it sounds as if I were separate from consciousness.

Right. This is because of the structure of language. In reality, what's happening is that consciousness, which is what I am, everyone is conscious in essence, consciousness is becoming conscious of itself.

[Speaker 2] (1:14:58 - 1:15:15)

And you don't know that until, and that's why that tape is going around the web of Dr. Jill Bowe Taylor, you don't know that until you can quiet the mind enough to know that you are not all of these thoughts that you have in your head, you are not your thoughts, but you are life itself.

[Speaker 11] (1:15:15 - 1:15:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:15 - 1:15:20)

That is what she also says in her book and in her lectures.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:20 - 1:15:20)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:21 - 1:15:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:21 - 1:15:57)

That's a wonderful realization, just when it comes to you, a person for the first time, it's just, whoa. Whoa. And that frees you from a lot of things that before were so heavy, the world can become such a burden to people, and your own mind can become such a burden, it creates so much suffering in people's lives.

If people had to live with somebody who inflicts all that negativity on them that they inflict on themselves through their own mind, they would have left that person a long time ago, but you can't leave your mind, you can only go beyond it.

[Speaker 2] (1:15:57 - 1:16:10)

And so being able to be conscious of your consciousness or aware of yourself as a perceiving entity or perceiving presence is really what the true awakening is about.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:10 - 1:16:10)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:10 - 1:16:11)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:11 - 1:16:16)

Yes. Yes. That's the awakening to who you are beyond the external appearance.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:16 - 1:16:29)

And that is what we're doing when we're angry and you see your ego flare up and all of that is to be able to step back and perceive yourself as the consciousness observing yourself as the angry person.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:30 - 1:16:30)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:30 - 1:16:30)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:31 - 1:16:32)

Yes. There's a, in the background.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:33 - 1:16:33)

A space in between that.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:33 - 1:16:34)

That's right.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:34 - 1:16:45)

And so the inner space you're talking about is the space between I am angry, I'm, you know, saying all of these things, and then there is a, there is the other self that is observing that.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:45 - 1:17:01)

Yes. Yes. Now, if you're angry and if the presence can be there in the background, that means there's already, you're already very present because it's not easy to remain present when there's anger, because anger has an enormous power.

So...

[Speaker 2] (1:17:01 - 1:17:08)

But if you're observing it, then you can say, I'm out of control. You know, people have done that, you can say to yourself, I'm out of control, I need to calm down.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:08 - 1:17:12)

Yes. Yes. But if you know that you're out of control, you're not completely out of control.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:12 - 1:17:13)

That's right. That's right.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:13 - 1:17:22)

That's right. So, and if, so if you know that you are, have been taken over by anger, you haven't been completely taken over because there's a knowing in the background.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:22 - 1:17:41)

Yeah. And I think a lot of parents have experienced this. You know, when your kids do something and it's so upsetting to you and you know in that moment I should not try to discipline them because I'm too angry to discipline them.

That part of you that knows that you're too angry to discipline them is the space that you're talking about.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:41 - 1:17:50)

Yes. Yes. Yes.

Yes. Got that. And so, and that's a, if you don't have that space, then you are completely controlled by the anger.

You become the anger. That's right. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:51 - 1:18:01)

That thing that allows you to step back is what you're talking about. I got it. I got it.

I got it. I got it. That part of you that says, I can step back and see I'm acting a fool.

[Speaker 1] (1:18:01 - 1:18:15)

Yes. And so if you, if you know that you are acting a fool, then it's not, there is a sanity there that's observing the insanity. And if you know that you are...

[Speaker 2] (1:18:15 - 1:18:18)

But sometimes people know they're acting a fool and they just keep on acting a fool.

[Speaker 1] (1:18:18 - 1:18:24)

Yes. That's possible too. For a while it can happen that the old, certain old behavior patterns...

[Speaker 2] (1:18:24 - 1:18:26)

But generally if you know you can pull yourself back.

[Speaker 1] (1:18:26 - 1:18:27)

Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:18:28 - 1:18:31)

And that which knows is the inner space that you're talking about.

[Speaker 1] (1:18:32 - 1:19:02)

Yes. There was a film, A Beautiful Mind some years ago about this scientist. With Russell Crowe.

Yes. And so here he became delusional, this scientist, completely absorbed by his mind and had all kinds of delusions. And at some point in the middle of the film, he suddenly realizes that these are delusions and he realized that he's insane.

And also the viewer at that moment realized it is so well done because until that point even the viewer doesn't know that.

[Speaker 2] (1:19:02 - 1:19:03)

Not quite sure. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:03 - 1:19:16)

And at that moment the healing begins because with the realization that I am insane, sanity has arisen. The observing presence is there. The observing presence.

And after that he could function again.

[Speaker 2] (1:19:16 - 1:19:18)

Is observing presence and inner space the same thing?

[Speaker 1] (1:19:19 - 1:19:22)

Yes. But observing should not be confused with judging.

[Speaker 2] (1:19:22 - 1:19:23)

I got it.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:24 - 1:19:30)

So there's no judgment. It's a clear... It's like a mirror.

It's like a mirror showing you what's there.

[Speaker 2] (1:19:30 - 1:19:42)

So there are literally two dimensions. There is the personality acting out of, you know, form and perceptions and all of that. And then there is the observer of that.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:43 - 1:20:08)

And the observer is not judging what is being observed. If the observer begins to judge, then it's the mind that has come back in. It just is.

And the observer is timeless and whatever the observer is observing, the behavior, the thinking is conditioned by the past. So you're bringing the timeless dimension into this world of time.

[Speaker 2] (1:20:08 - 1:20:31)

Yes. And those of you who are reading Dr. Jill Boat Taylor's book, Stroke of Insight, what she said to me today, because she's been following our classes, and she was saying, you know, what Eckhart calls consciousness, I call right brain. Yes.

Yeah. Right brain versus left brain. Left brain is gone.

The right brain is the higher consciousness.

[Speaker 11] (1:20:32 - 1:20:32)

Yes. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:20:33 - 1:21:01)

So, as I've said before, I love the message boards on Oprah.com, and I saw a posting that I wanted to share with everyone. It's from someone who calls himself Student 99. It said, I've seen many, many posts by concerned Christians.

Is Student 99 here? I thought we had him. I heard he was on Skype.

Well, I don't mean here, here, Dean. I know he's not in the building. Bring up Student 99.

So, Student 99, is that you?

[Speaker 7] (1:21:02 - 1:21:02)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:21:02 - 1:21:47)

Hi, I'm Skye. I love this email. I love the fact that you have a face and a body and everything, because you just were an entity on the web to me, posted by Student 99 that says, I have seen many posts by concerned Christians wondering whether this book is a threat to their faith.

And you said, as a Christian, you don't think it is, and here is why. You want to tell us why? Because I thought this was such a beautiful email.

And you know, I've gotten some flack from some Christians. I've even been called the Antichrist, which I've been kind of amused by that, for introducing this book to the world. So I was interested in hearing what you had to say, Student 99, whose name is really Alan from Eugene, Oregon.

Hi, Alan.

[Speaker 7] (1:21:47 - 1:21:50)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart. Hello.

Hi.

[Speaker 2] (1:21:51 - 1:21:57)

You said... Well, you know... Go ahead.

Go ahead. Okay. You go ahead.

So I'm going to let you tell me what you said in the email.

[Speaker 7] (1:21:58 - 1:22:39)

Well, basically, you know, I observed some people that were posting that were in a lot of distress, and because they felt that the book was an attack on their faith, many of them had not read the book. And so I wanted to just provide a little bit of perspective on that. From my perspective, I felt like Eckhart's book allowed me to do more than just quote what Jesus said, and to actually understand the depth of what he was teaching and be able to practice what he taught, rather than just quote what he taught.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:39 - 1:24:01)

Well, let me read what you said specifically, because I thought you said it so beautifully here. Most Christians understand the concepts from the Bible of surrendering their lives to God and living a loving life and living in the peace that passes understanding. Christians can quote Jesus' saying such as, be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect, or judge not that you be not judged, or you must die to live, or deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me.

Unfortunately, not all Christians have succeeded in following up the talk with the walk. This is because these quotes point to an internal transformation, which some Christians have not yet fully experienced. That is why I strongly recommend this book, you said, Alan.

It provides for very powerful tools for being able to successfully follow Jesus' teachings, rather than just quoting them. The book doesn't ask anyone to change their religion of choice, but does help tremendously in successfully applying faith. In a nutshell, you say, Alan, the book shows how to apply forgiveness to every person and every situation.

It shows how to shine the light of awareness on our unconscious hatred of this moment and thereby overcome the cares of this world. If you want to go deeper than knowing about God at the level of thoughts and experience God at the level of knowing, I welcome you to join us in reading A New Earth, Blessings from Student99. Isn't that well said, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (1:24:01 - 1:24:04)

Oh, yes. Wonderful. Yeah.

Yeah. Thank you.

[Speaker 7] (1:24:05 - 1:24:21)

Alan, thank you for that. Sure. And, you know, I had left the church and I ended up being able to return to church because of understanding how to apply the concepts in this book.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:22 - 1:24:41)

Well, that's good. Well, thank you so much. Thank you so much.

I don't read all the negative stuff, though, because it doesn't help me. So I'm only, you know, I'm only interested in speaking to people who want to hear what we have to say. And if you don't agree with what I'm saying, that's really OK.

I bless everybody and their path, whatever that is. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:42 - 1:25:09)

And I've had letters from some priests and nuns and Buddhist monks, and they all found the book very helpful. They went more deeply into their own tradition, because when you go deep enough into your own tradition, eventually all traditions, eventually you end up in the same place, the same realization. On the surface, the traditions are different.

There's only one God at the center.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:10 - 1:25:20)

There is only one God. I believe that. The source of all things, all creation.

So Peter is Skyping us from his dining room in Phoenix, Arizona. I love to see where people are. Is that a green dining?

Is that green?

[Speaker 4] (1:25:21 - 1:25:22)

Yes, it is.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:22 - 1:25:38)

That's my favorite color. My gosh, that's such a lovely color. Peter is Skyping us from his dining room in Phoenix, where he and a group of friends gather every Monday night to watch our live webcasts.

I think that's so great. I hear you adopted a dog and named it Oprah. Is that true?

[Speaker 4] (1:25:39 - 1:25:51)

Come on, Oprah. Come on. Let me see her.

She came to us the first night of the webcast. The system went down, so it crashed. We had all the people gathered, and she came into my life that night.

[Speaker 2] (1:25:52 - 1:25:59)

Wow. Oh, my cutie pie. She's holding up her name.

[Speaker 4] (1:25:59 - 1:26:00)

So she's a new addition to my family.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:00 - 1:26:11)

That's so great. That's really great. You say you were addicted to smoking for 30 years but quit 11 weeks ago after reading A New Earth.

This ties into your question, correct?

[Speaker 4] (1:26:12 - 1:26:32)

Exactly. We started our group four weeks before the actual webcast, and we were reading the chapter on number eight. So I applied the techniques to quitting smoking.

And with about five minutes work and about three hours time, I completely stopped. No urges, no more cravings, nothing. No willpower or anything like that.

It was so easy. It was amazing.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:32 - 1:26:34)

What is it that you applied?

[Speaker 4] (1:26:35 - 1:27:05)

Becoming conscious of the feelings. I had run out of cigarettes, and I thought I had to go to the store. But when the craving came, I said, OK, let's be with the craving.

Let's feel it. What does it actually feel like? Usually, we just react.

And I actually sat there and closed my eyes and felt it. And it started to dissolve. And it went away.

And about two or three hours later, another craving came. And I did the same thing. And this time, the feeling went away even faster.

And then finally, when it came back about a third time, when I put my mind to it, it just completely disappeared.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:06 - 1:27:06)

Wow.

[Speaker 4] (1:27:06 - 1:27:07)

Gone. It never came back.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:08 - 1:27:24)

So were you also doing, I think Eckhart suggests in the addiction section, taking deep breaths sometimes when you feel like you need the craving for whether it's cigarettes or food or whatever, to take the three deep breaths and see what happens if the feeling dissipates? Did you do that?

[Speaker 4] (1:27:25 - 1:27:55)

Yes, I did. I took the breaths to basically create stillness, to become calm. So I took long, deep breaths and just sort of calmed down and then just started to feel the feelings and watch the thoughts.

And I've tried to quit hundreds of times and sometimes a couple of months successfully. But there was always willpower involved. There's always a craving still there.

There's always a, you know, if I just had one that was always still in the back of my mind, that's no longer there. I can go out with my friends on a Friday night. They can all be smoking.

And I don't even want to look at one.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:55 - 1:27:57)

What in the world happened to you?

[Speaker 4] (1:27:58 - 1:27:59)

It was miraculous.

[Speaker 2] (1:27:59 - 1:28:21)

Yes, that's great. And have you been able to apply the teachings from the book in other areas of your life? I mean, for myself, I've just found that being able to go back to my breath in the middle of the day when things get crazier, I mean, something Eckhart said, I think, on one of the beginning classes about one complete full breath is a meditation.

[Speaker 4] (1:28:23 - 1:28:25)

Well, that's where the question comes in. Because I do have other issues.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:25 - 1:28:27)

One conscious breath is a meditation.

[Speaker 4] (1:28:27 - 1:28:31)

Earlier in the book, in the chapter, he talks about going below thought.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:31 - 1:28:31)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (1:28:31 - 1:28:59)

And he described my situation exactly like he's here. You talk about alcohol, using food and TV just to go below thoughts, sort of to numb the senses, numb your thoughts, and just sort of go into trance, if you will. And I do that a lot.

And I've been trying to break away from that by using the techniques. And I have not had the same success. And you also say, don't make it a problem.

But I think I've made it a problem. And I want to kind of break from that.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:01 - 1:29:09)

So you're asking a question about how to use this more forcefully or whatever for alcohol?

[Speaker 4] (1:29:10 - 1:29:22)

Yeah, with alcohol especially and food. I tend to overeat when I'm tired. And I just want to relax.

And food, alcohol, TV tend to be the things I use. And that brings you below thought when we're trying to be above thought.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:22 - 1:29:23)

Right.

[Speaker 4] (1:29:23 - 1:29:27)

And when I try and do that, I'm not as successful. I get very frustrated.

[Speaker 2] (1:29:27 - 1:29:29)

OK, what do you want to say, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (1:29:29 - 1:30:50)

Well, it's a wonderful success story as far as the smoking is concerned and bringing, experiencing how awareness can dissolve old patterns. In some cases, instantly. And in other cases, it takes more time for awareness to dissolve the old pattern.

And awareness has to be brought to the pattern when it arises repeatedly. And it does not mean that every time awareness meets the pattern that awareness is going to win. Win may not be the right word.

Because awareness, of course, is never fighting anything. Awareness is just there as the conscious presence. So bringing conscious presence, for example, into the urge to have a drink.

Not that one or two drinks are a problem. But if drinking drags you down to below thinking, then, of course, it is helpful to bring presence into the urge when it arises in the same way that you did when you felt the urge come upon you to smoke. So have you practiced that?

Have you been able to feel the urge to drink and then bring awareness to that? And what happened?

[Speaker 4] (1:30:51 - 1:30:56)

Yes, I have. And it kind of postpones. And eventually, I kind of break down.

[Speaker 1] (1:30:57 - 1:32:04)

Yes, I believe I mentioned in the book that bring awareness to it. And it may well happen that the desire, the urge is still there after 10 minutes of awareness. I believe I mentioned that.

It does not mean that you have lost. It means that the desire is very strong. And at that point, perhaps you will have a drink.

And when it happens again, you bring awareness to it again. Eventually, something will happen to the pattern. It's very rare to have instant success as you did with smoking.

It does happen in some cases. But bring awareness to old patterns, whatever it is, addictive patterns, behavior patterns. Bring awareness.

And eventually, they cannot coexist for that long. So it's a continuing practice. But don't expect perfection.

Don't expect you to be the perfect human being who never touches a drink again or whatever. As I said to Oprah, I enjoy a drink occasionally.

[Speaker 2] (1:32:05 - 1:32:35)

And I said, woo-hoo. So what he's saying also, and you said this in the beginning, Peter, don't judge it. And as you begin to practice, what I hear you say is this miracle that you experienced with cigarettes is just that because it rarely happens that you start this one

time and it works immediately.

What you're saying is the more you apply the practice of bringing consciousness to this desire or craving, to this craving, that it will gradually lessen.

[Speaker 1] (1:32:35 - 1:32:35)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:32:35 - 1:32:38)

It will lessen. It will weaken. It will weaken.

[Speaker 1] (1:32:38 - 1:33:00)

Yes. You can also apply it to other things like many people are addicted to television. One day without watching TV would be dreadful for them.

So you could perhaps, as a practice, like a spiritual practice, you could say one day a week, I'll see what happens if I don't watch television. Don't do it when the Oprah show is on.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:00 - 1:33:02)

Thank you. For that part.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:03 - 1:33:16)

One day a week, I'll practice. And then observe inside yourself what it feels like, what the need to switch on, the need to be entertained, the need to be stimulated, to absorb what's on the screen.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:18 - 1:33:21)

So one day practice. Thank you so much, Peter. Those are friends behind you?

[Speaker 4] (1:33:22 - 1:33:24)

Yes, they're my neighbors. Hi.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:25 - 1:33:46)

Peter, move out of the way so we can see them, so we can say hi to everybody. Hi, everybody. Hi, Oprah.

Hi, Peter. Hi to Peter's group. That's so great there in Phoenix.

Yay, guys. Thank you for watching. Thank you.

Thank you. Thanks, Peter. Thank you so much.

Thank you so much. And all the best to Oprah, you know.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:49 - 1:33:51)

Oprah's very cute. Oprah's very cute.

[Speaker 2] (1:33:51 - 1:33:59)

We're talking about the dog. Okay, we've got Eric on the line calling from Copenhagen, Denmark. Eric, what's your question?

[Speaker 8] (1:34:00 - 1:34:10)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Eckhart. Hi.

Hi, my question is in reference to page 224, when Eckhart writes the phrase, these two shall pass.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:10 - 1:34:11)

Oh yeah, love that.

[Speaker 8] (1:34:12 - 1:34:54)

Yeah, and I feel it's a real powerful phrase that brings a person into the present moment. And it's also used as a slogan in 12-step recovery programs. And when someone's been living very much in the ego-informed surrenders and enters a 12-step program, which I did over five years ago, and I currently act as a sponsor for newcomers, am I acting too much in the ego because I'm constantly working these 12 steps and sharing them and your concepts with others?

And also, if this is the case, how can I live in consciousness and work at 12-step programs with the meetings and sponsorship without the ego being so much at the forefront? Correct.

[Speaker 1] (1:34:55 - 1:35:42)

Well, that's a good question. The criterion is whether you yourself are still living it on a daily basis. If you're living the truth of it, this two shall pass is only a pointer towards a particular state of consciousness that is a state of detachment.

Not that you don't care, but it's a state of you still care deeply, but there is a detachment from what's happening, an inner sense of freedom in the background. So when you use these tools, for example, a phrase or a pointer, sometimes people who teach these things professionally, after a while, they stop practicing themselves and they just use

them as a formal thing, and then the ego can come back in.

[Speaker 2] (1:35:42 - 1:35:43)

Because you think you know everything.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:43 - 1:36:36)

Yes, yes. And then you are not living it, you're teaching it, but you're not yourself living it anymore. And that is the question that only you can answer, whether you are still living the reality that's beyond this pointer, that what the pointer points to.

And if you are living it, the ego has not taken over and you're doing wonderful and very helpful work. I know that the 12-step program has been extremely helpful for many people. I've had many people who've come to spirituality through that.

So I'm sure you're doing wonderful work and continue to be alert and awake so that there's a certain amount of self-observation just to make sure that you are still there yourself, that you come from that place so that the mind doesn't take over.

[Speaker 2] (1:36:37 - 1:36:38)

Okay, Eric.

[Speaker 8] (1:36:38 - 1:36:40)

Yeah, that sounds great. Thank you very much.

[Speaker 2] (1:36:40 - 1:37:28)

Thank you, Eric. So let's begin, because I think that's a huge part of chapter eight in the discovery of inner space. The story that you began with the ancient Sufi story from the Middle East about a king who's continuously torn between happiness and depression.

On page 223, you write, the slightest thing would cause him great upset or provoke an intense reaction, and his happiness would quickly turn into disappointment and despair. A time came when the king finally got tired of himself and of life, began to seek a way out. He sent for a wise man who lived in his kingdom, who was reputed to be enlightened.

And when the wise man came, the king said to him, I wanna be like you. Can you give me something that will bring balance, serenity, and wisdom into my life? I will pay any price you ask.

What is that price the king had to pay? What is the price all of us have to pay?

[Speaker 1] (1:37:29 - 1:37:55)

Well, first of all, of course, the price the king asked, well, how much does it cost? How much is it going to cost? And the wise man said to him, it is of such value that even your whole kingdom could not pay for it.

Now, what that means is that the primary thing in your life is nothing external. What is primary in your life is your inner state of consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (1:37:55 - 1:37:56)

I got that.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:56 - 1:38:10)

And compared to that, you could have the greatest riches if you are in a state of anxiety, of fear, negativity, nothing is worth that.

[Speaker 2] (1:38:10 - 1:38:18)

You know, in the Bible and in the church, I don't know if it's in the Bible, but I know in the church, we sing this song called, it is well with my soul.

[Speaker 1] (1:38:19 - 1:38:19)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:38:19 - 1:38:40)

So unless it is well with your soul, it does not matter what your outward state is. Where are you living? How big, how many square feet you have?

How many cars, whatever acclaim you have received in the world, unless it is well with your soul or your inner state of being. Yes. Your inner space, then you're not well.

[Speaker 1] (1:38:40 - 1:39:38)

Yes. And so that's the, always to bear that in mind. What is, am I at one with life at this moment?

What is my inner state at this moment? Your primary concern in any situation needs to be your inner state. Your secondary concern is the outer situation because only when you're in a state of rightness, of presence, can you adequately deal with outer situations.

So what is the price? There is no price in terms of monetary value, anything like that. We could say that the price to pay is you let go of the false self.

That is the price you pay. The false mind made self, the price to pay is identification with that false, the false I, the false me. And so that's a relatively easy price to pay because

it's wonderful to let go of that.

[Speaker 2] (1:39:38 - 1:39:43)

But the wise man gives the king a ring. Yes. And inside the ring, the inscription is.

[Speaker 1] (1:39:44 - 1:40:05)

This too shall pass. This too shall pass. And he says, whatever situation arises in your life, before you call it good or bad, before you react, before you judge it, touch this ring and remember the inscription that you, and this too shall pass.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:05 - 1:40:40)

Now, I find that to be very helpful. As a matter of fact, when I was going through last year, this crisis at my school, that was one of the things I said to myself every day is, live in this moment, let's handle this moment as it comes and this moment as it comes, and then what comes next, I'll handle that moment. And I always knew this too shall pass.

Works for me very well. And I'm sure a lot of other people, if you're in a difficult stage in your life, you're going through, you know, trauma or divorce or whatever to know that this too shall pass. But when I'm feeling happy and feeling joyful, I don't wanna think this too shall pass.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:42 - 1:40:44)

That can actually also be very peaceful.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:44 - 1:40:51)

If you know that it is transient, I know that- No, but you're having such a good time and then you're thinking, this too shall pass, so don't get too happy.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:51 - 1:40:57)

If you don't know that this too shall pass, then what can happen? You will cling to the situation internally.

[Speaker 2] (1:40:57 - 1:40:57)

I got it.

[Speaker 1] (1:40:57 - 1:41:11)

I got that. And if you cling to the situation and then it passes as it will. As it will.

Or even if it doesn't pass yet, it might last for a little while, even while the clinging itself means already some fear is coming in.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:11 - 1:41:12)

Oh, I see that.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:12 - 1:41:24)

Through the holding on, you don't want this situation to leave you or you don't want to leave the situation. The clinging means brings already up some fear and that means you can't enjoy it as much really.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:24 - 1:41:53)

I just had a great epiphany, not even for myself, but for all the people that I know that our key word here is clinging. So many people do this in relationships. They're holding on to a relationship that has already shown itself to be transient.

It's moving on to the next level. And what so many people do, they want to hold on and let it be as it always was. And it's in the process of passing.

And you should let it pass.

[Speaker 1] (1:41:53 - 1:42:12)

Yes, allowing change to happen and becoming comfortable with change. This is part of this too shall pass because we live in this world where things continuously pass away. The Buddhists call it impermanence.

It's one of the deepest truths of the Buddha.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:12 - 1:42:20)

And the problem lies when you expect it to be the same as it always was. And that's where so many people get in trouble in their relationships especially.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:20 - 1:42:32)

Yes. And it's an inability to let go. Inability to let go of situations, of people.

And that eventually brings suffering.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:32 - 1:43:02)

Yeah, just recently a friend of mine was telling me about her husband had said to her, he wasn't sure he wanted to remain in the relationship. He wasn't sure. And there's, you know, seeking counseling about that.

And he's now, you know, sleeping in a different bedroom and all that stuff. And she's trying to hold on and wants things to be the way they were and wants to have a baby

and all of that. And you would say, put that ring on.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:02 - 1:43:44)

Yes. So especially don't cling. If you don't cling, that means there's no fear in the situation.

The fear comes through the clinging, through not wanting the change. And so if you approach the situation without fear, then one of two things can happen in a situation like this. There may become a deepening in the relationship.

When a relationship hits a crisis, it may be time for the relationship to dissolve or it may be time for a deepening. And so- How do you know the difference? When there's no fear, then you will know either it will deepen or it will end.

Wow, or it will pass on. The fear keeps you stuck where you are.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:45 - 1:44:18)

Got it. I got it. So let's see some of the email questions you've been sending during our class.

Linda in Tokyo, Japan. How do I tell the difference between an ego decision or a conscious decision? I'm in a sexless marriage and want to leave.

Oh, I'm scared. I've been living in the moment for the past eight weeks. My answer is not coming to me.

That's what Linda wants to know. How do I tell the difference between an ego decision or a conscious decision? Yes.

I'm in a sexless marriage and I want to leave, but I'm scared. You just said it. You just said it.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:18 - 1:44:54)

Yes. And an additional thing here, sometimes something comes to you. This is what I'm going to do, your mind says.

Okay, now I know what I have to do. The question is, where does that realization of what you have to do come from? Does it come from the ego?

Or does it come from the deeper level of your being? How can I tell the difference? There's a qualitative difference, a difference in one could say vibrational frequency.

Correct. If it comes from the deeper level of yourself out of the stillness, it's always associated with peace.

[Speaker 11] (1:44:54 - 1:44:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:55 - 1:45:06)

It's a peaceful realization. If it's agitated or if it's fearful and says, now I know what I have to do, or if it's angry, agitated, fearful, it comes from the upper level.

[Speaker 2] (1:45:06 - 1:46:06)

And another thing I would say to Linda in Tokyo, Japan, you're absolutely correct. Another thing, it comes from, if it's coming from inner space that we're talking about in chapter eight, if it's coming from consciousness or inner space and not your ego, not only will you feel peace, but you won't have to ask 15 other people, is it the right thing? You will know it's the right thing.

You will know it's the right thing. And I have found that if you are operating from consciousness, your higher consciousness, or as we're calling it in this chapter, inner space, that whether it's buying a pair of shoes or making a life decision, if it comes from the place of inner space, you know the answer. When it's outside yourself, if it's in your ego mind, you have to ask the store clerk, you have to ask your friends, you have to ask everybody, what do you think?

What do you think? What do you think of these shoes? What do you think?

What do you think? But when you are, when it's well with your soul, the answer's clear. That's how you know.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:07 - 1:46:15)

Quiet, peaceful, certainty. Yes. Powerful, quiet, peaceful.

You know what you have to do. You know what's right for you.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:16 - 1:46:40)

It's like the other day I had to cancel an engagement and I was saying I never cancel things, but after I canceled, I felt such a calm. And I knew that that was the right decision. Yes.

Although it might be upsetting to other people, I felt such a calmness about it. And that is true for anybody who's making a decision. When you make the right decision, you feel a calmness and a peace about it.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:40 - 1:46:48)

Yes. And that also relationships, leaving a relationship, if it comes from the right place, you leave, but you're peaceful. Right.

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:49 - 1:46:50)

You're not afraid.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:50 - 1:46:50)

No.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:51 - 1:46:54)

You're not afraid. You still could be sad about it though. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:54 - 1:46:55)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:46:55 - 1:46:58)

Sadness can happen. You could be sad about it, disappointed about it.

[Speaker 1] (1:46:58 - 1:47:34)

Interesting thing about sadness is, or sadness, of course, also arises when somebody passes away close to you. There can be sadness. And if there's acceptance, then, because death is one of the prime examples of everything passing away.

Before life form passes away, everybody, if you live with a partner, either your partner will leave you or you will leave sooner or later through death. So that's the allowing change to happen.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:35 - 1:48:00)

Allowing change to happen. And you say the key to understanding this too will pass at the top of page 225 is knowing that non-resistance, not resisting, non-judgment and non-attachment are the three aspects of true freedom and enlightened living. Hard to be non-resistant, non-judgmental and non-attached when it's your husband who says, I don't longer want to be in this relationship.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:00 - 1:48:17)

Yes. Yes. And if you share a great deal of past with another person, it could also be a family member or a parent, then it's sometimes harder to be present when there's a huge amount of past in the relationship.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:17 - 1:48:33)

I got that. But once you see and accept the transience of all things, page 225, and the inevitability of change, you can enjoy the pleasures of the world while they last without fear of loss or anxiety about the future.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:33 - 1:48:33)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:33 - 1:48:35)

I thought that was so brilliant the way you did that.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:36 - 1:48:43)

That's the beautiful thing about being able to enjoy the things of this world, knowing that nothing is going to last.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:43 - 1:48:44)

Nothing's going to last.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:44 - 1:48:50)

And you can actually enjoy it more deeply now without the fear that it might finish. Because it is gonna finish. Yes, yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:51 - 1:48:51)

It is gonna finish.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:51 - 1:48:55)

And then something else will take its place. It's continuous coming and going.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:55 - 1:49:22)

I got that. Tonight we're Skyping again with a study group in Los Angeles who've gathered at the Bodhi Tree bookstore. It's a landmark in West Hollywood.

Hi, everybody at the Bodhi Tree. Hi. Oh, gosh.

There's our Bodhi followers. Nick has a question about finding his purpose. And I know it's something that's been on the minds of quite a few of our students.

Hello, Nick. Let's hear it. Hey, Oprah, what's up?

Hey. Everything's up.

[Speaker 3] (1:49:24 - 1:49:50)

My question is basically, well, you have to worry about a lot of stuff in life. You have to go to work. You have to pay your bill.

Your cell phone bill works in the now, but if you don't work today, it's not gonna work a month from today. So how do you live in the now and still worry about your IRAs, investing in your future, what you're gonna do as far as, you know, money, paying your bills, doing what you have to do, you know, in this ego-censored world, especially in Los Angeles. So.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:51 - 1:50:03)

So what you're saying is, what if, how is this becoming who we are truly, what if becoming who we were truly meant to be really isn't financially practical is what you're asking, right?

[Speaker 3] (1:50:04 - 1:50:33)

Yeah, what if I wanted to go on a mountain somewhere and just become who I was? I eventually would, I guess, starve or freeze, but I mean, you know, how do you integrate this in your everyday life? Sort of being in the now, being the essence of who you are, without suffering in the long run, without, you know, the squirrel would suffer, the squirrel would die if it didn't put away nuts for the future, so.

Okay, okay.

[Speaker 2] (1:50:33 - 1:50:43)

Yeah, I'd seen a question that you'd sent earlier, Nick, where you'd said, it's all fine and dandy to read about becoming who you truly are and being who you were meant to be, but how do we do that and still pay all of our bills?

[Speaker 3] (1:50:44 - 1:50:45)

Right, right.

[Speaker 2] (1:50:46 - 1:50:46)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:46 - 1:51:51)

Okay, thank you, thank you, good question. However, the question, the first few words of your question already contained an error, and it's easy, if an error keeps into a question, then it's hard to answer it truly. The error was, you said we have to worry about paying our bills and all kinds of things.

Is that true? No, you have to pay your bills, but you don't have to worry about paying your bills. And the squirrel has to put away the nuts, but the squirrel is not worried about the nuts, only humans are worried about their nuts.

So, you can, being present with what you do does not mean that you neglect your daily affairs and so on, it means you deal with them in a different and in fact, more powerful and more effective way. You give up the worrying part, you still pay your bills, but you let go of the worrying about paying your bills. In that way, you learn from the squirrel how to live.

[Speaker 2] (1:51:51 - 1:51:54)

Because worrying is your choice, you see that, don't you, Nick?

[Speaker 3] (1:51:56 - 1:52:30)

Worrying is your choice. At times when I don't worry, I've had moments in my life where I didn't worry, I just kind of let the waves of the world roll over me, and I kind of did nothing about situations and hoped that they would work out themselves, and they didn't. I mean, worrying did help me in the past to actually get things together and get my life on track.

I guess to be, for me in my life, to be in the essence, to be with my spiritual self, it doesn't, it's not enough. I have to really be actively worried about the actual day-to-day business of surviving. Which most people have to do, you know.

[Speaker 1] (1:52:30 - 1:54:00)

I would still argue with that. It is true that you need to take action. It is not true that you need to worry in order to be able to take action.

So you can actually experiment with, in your daily life, start with little situations. Let's say there's a pile of bills that you have to pay. How do you approach these bills?

Are you going to worry the night before, or on the day, or am I going to be able to pay you? You just take one bill after another, you look at it, you face it. Okay, do I have the money in my bank account or not?

If you don't have the money in my bank account, I have to do something to make more money. What is it possible, what can I do now? Put that aside, look, this action I can take.

Pick up the phone, make a phone call. Do the present, effective, powerful, but no worry. If you, then you will see your whole life will become not only more effective and more powerful, but also much easier.

It flows with greater ease. Nothing in nature is worried. All the animals do what they

have to do, but they don't worry about it.

Everything is active in nature. The trees are active, the grass, the flowers, everything is active and putting out energy. It's only the humans that worry about it and think they need worry in order to survive in this world.

You don't need worry, you need action, but not worry.

[Speaker 2] (1:54:00 - 1:54:12)

That's an interesting point. If you've ever been on safari or seen animals on a hunt or actually seen a kill, they go out in search of, and we've, I've, everybody I'm sure watched the planet, or you watched the Planet Earth series, right, Nick? Where you see the animals.

[Speaker 3] (1:54:12 - 1:54:19)

No. Oh, Nick, you got it. You know what?

What he was saying, I'm sorry. Nick, you gotta get the Planet Earth.

[Speaker 2] (1:54:20 - 1:54:34)

And you get to see all these animals hunting other animals. And I just, you just made me think of what you were saying. As the animals hunting the other animal, it's just doing it.

It's not worrying. I hope I find a rabbit today. I hope I find a rabbit today.

Yeah.

[Speaker 11] (1:54:34 - 1:54:34)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:54:35 - 1:54:38)

Go ahead, Nick, go ahead. You want to continue? Yeah.

[Speaker 3] (1:54:38 - 1:54:52)

That reminds me of the lily in the valley. It doesn't worry about clothing itself in the Bible. It just does.

It just exists. It worries not, or the sparrow or the crow does not worry how it's gonna get its next meal. It just, it just does.

[Speaker 1] (1:54:52 - 1:54:52)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (1:54:52 - 1:55:01)

And that reminds me of that right there. Yes. But I'm thinking, I guess I'm thinking of those hippies in India that still haven't come back.

They're just, they're just broken.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:02 - 1:55:30)

Yeah, yeah. Nick is saying, Nick is saying, well, that's really good for that Bible stuff and for the lilies of the valley. But listen, I'm living in L.A. and I gotta worry about this. Is there anybody else there at the Bodhi tree behind you that, is there anybody that disagrees with Nick that has, you know, similar issues and you're not worried about it? You've been able to apply. Come up to the microphone here.

Let's get, hey, come on up there. Hi.

[Speaker 10] (1:55:31 - 1:55:32)

Hi.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:32 - 1:55:33)

Hi, you are. Hi, who are you?

[Speaker 10] (1:55:34 - 1:55:34)

I'm Jessica.

[Speaker 2] (1:55:34 - 1:55:38)

Oh, hi, Jessica. Hi. So what do you want to say about what we've been talking about?

[Speaker 10] (1:55:39 - 1:56:09)

You know, there's a, it's on page 238 and it's about becoming one with the situation and that the solution arises out of that. And I've always kind of been a more of a take action person first and then deal with the inner peace and all that later. But I was wondering, how do you deal with things like that in relationships and things like weight management and all of those issues?

Do you just become still and just hope for an answer to come or do you still actively seek one out?

[Speaker 1] (1:56:10 - 1:58:28)

So what you're referring to is on this page, it says you don't react. What I'm saying there is you don't react against a situation when a situation arises that- You merge with it. Yes.

And the solution rises out of the situation. Now this should not be confused with becoming inactive or just sitting there and looking and not doing anything. What it means is there's no inner resistance to that arising situation.

Sometimes things happen when you have a project, you have some work to do, and something happens to, some obstacle arises in what you want to do. A person, a situation arises. And so for many people, as soon as an obstacle arises, they become resistant and they go into a negative state and try to fight the obstacle.

They're fighting the obstacle rather than accepting the moment as it is internally and say, oh, the situation has changed. We talked about change. Situations change continuously and the world does not necessarily do what it wants you to do, what you want it to do.

So you face a situation and any change that happens is immediately accepted inside. And through the acceptance, you respond to the situation. So you're not accusing, you're not making wrong, you're not complaining about the situation to yourself and others.

So many people burn up a huge amount of energy uselessly that they could use to deal with the situation, but they burn up a huge amount of energy complaining in their heads and to others about what has happened. Instead of looking at what has happened and saying, oh, this is how it is, what can I do now? A moment of stillness and then action happens.

No complaining, no resisting, no fighting against, not making a person or situation into an enemy. That again, burns up a lot of useless energy and brings up a lot of energy that is going to sabotage what you want to do.

[Speaker 2] (1:58:28 - 1:58:42)

So again, you say when instead of reacting against the situation, you merge with it, the solution arises out of the situation itself. Actually, it's not you, the person who's looking and listening, but the alert stillness itself or the inner space.

[Speaker 1] (1:58:42 - 1:58:55)

When I say the solution arises out of the situation, it does not mean that you don't do anything. In some cases, it is you who's going to take the action, but it will come out of a powerful place of being one with the situation.

[Speaker 2] (1:58:56 - 2:01:02)

Yeah, I think too, Jessica, ask Nick to come back to the microphone. Thanks, Jessica.

Nick, come back up here, we're not through with you.

I think too, I think you really represent a whole lot of people, particularly young people who have said to me personally or have emailed and think that being in alignment with who you're truly meant to be and awakening to your purpose represents passivity, that you're just sort of sitting around just waiting on a woo-hoo moment and not really doing anything. The real purpose of this entire book and the work of spirituality is to get you, to get us to align our personalities with our soul or higher consciousness so that the work that you do in the world comes from the place of the higher consciousness and you use your ego or personality to serve that. You allow your personality to serve the calling of consciousness that has put you here on the earth in the first place.

And when you do that, everything has a flow to it. You're in the right job that gives you the right amount of money for you at any given time because you are in alignment. So you're not worrying about things because you're not living beyond your means.

You're not stressing about things because you're not allowing your ego to determine and define who you are in the world. So you're not acting out of an external self but acting out of the place of inner space or consciousness so everything is in alignment. And that's not passive.

That's not woo-hoo, I can't pay my bills and so let me find myself later. That is aligning your personality with the higher consciousness so that your higher consciousness, you operate from a place of being and the inner space is directing and guiding your life and not the outer space. You get it?

[Speaker 3] (2:01:03 - 2:01:14)

Yeah, I do. Sorry if I made you mad, Oprah. But I do, that's wonderful.

Thank you so much. Pleasure to be here.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:15 - 2:01:34)

No, I'm not mad, but I just, I hear this a lot. I mean, earlier today, my stylist was saying, well, what about my passion? What about my passion?

You want me to just give up my passion? No, this isn't about giving up your passion. It's about feeling your passion more deeply.

Yes, yes. And being in alignment with that.

[Speaker 3] (2:01:36 - 2:01:57)

How do you know if what you want, what your passion is, isn't just ego-driven? What if I just wanted to be like, I don't know, a rock star and that's just completely ego-driven and

that didn't help the world in any way, but if I kept on working towards it, it would just not be serving anyone but myself. What if my passion is wrong?

If it's wrong. Sorry, too many questions.

[Speaker 1] (2:01:58 - 2:02:32)

No, it's fine. No, go ahead, go ahead. Eckhart, answer that.

Sometimes you may not know until you have achieved what you wanted to achieve, whether it was ego or not. When you get what you wanted to achieve and very soon you find it does not satisfy you, then it was the ego. So you can, it's a learning process.

Nobody's saying you shouldn't try to achieve this or that. If the impulse is there to have this or that, do it and see what happens. If it doesn't satisfy you, it's the ego.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:33 - 2:03:18)

And the greatest rock stars are those who are rock stars because they sing or they perform because they had to. And whether they were performing to grand crowds or in their garage space to just their family members, they sing because they have to. The greatest dancers are those who dance because they have to and they become rock stars or dancing stars because that is coming from such a pure place of passion.

And that's what the world feels because those are the people who last. The people who are operating from the passionate, true space and not just doing it because they wanna make the money or because of the ego self. That's what I think.

But it's nice talking to you, Nick.

[Speaker 3] (2:03:18 - 2:03:21)

Thank you, sorry it took so long, but it was a pleasure being here.

[Speaker 2] (2:03:21 - 2:03:48)

Thanks everybody at the Bodhi Tree, Jessica, Nick and all our Bodhi buddies. Okay, now we have an email from Sumaya in Bethlehem who wanted to say that I live under military occupation. I've witnessed the demolishing of my home and I do not know how to apply your theories when the outside is so out of my control.

How can I be at peace when there are soldiers outside my door? There's a question for you.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:49 - 2:05:14)

That is of course the experience of many people in this world. If you look what's

happening in this world, people are confronted with violence all the time, with loss, they lose their homes, they lose family members. Is it possible here to enter a state of surrender?

Is it possible to accept the seemingly unacceptable? And for some people it has been possible. I know it is possible to accept what seems unacceptable.

And if you accept the unacceptable, you will go very deep very quickly. And what otherwise would take many years of realization to realize, it will take you to a very deep point if you accept something, great loss in your life. In prison, I continuously get letters from people in prison now.

This is unacceptable. Some prisons are dreadful places. And some people there live in agony and suffering and anger and resentment.

And some, a minority, a few have realized that they can live in the state of inner surrender, which is not negative. It's a complete acceptance that this is as it is right now.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:15 - 2:05:18)

Because they are in non-resistance, non-judgment and non-attachment.

[Speaker 1] (2:05:18 - 2:05:51)

Yes, because, and you accept it because, why should you accept it? Because it is at this moment, it is. So no matter what it is, accepting the isness of this moment brings you to a place of inner freedom and also a place of power.

You have to go, in order to accept the unacceptable, you have to go really very deep and bring a very deep yes to this moment. An uncompromising yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:52 - 2:06:25)

I think that a lot of people have trouble with the word accepting it, because accepting says to people, I must then also condone it. What you're saying is stop, by your term accept, you mean don't deny that it's happening. As you resist it, if you continue to resist it, the example you used earlier in our classes is, you're in the mud, you're stuck in the mud, the wheels are in the mud, you must first accept that I'm stuck in the mud before you can get yourself out of the mud.

Yes, yes. You can't keep saying, I'm not in the mud.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:25 - 2:06:37)

No, and you don't say, I shouldn't be, why did this happen to me? I can't believe I'm in the mud. And then all the energy goes into the complaining and into the resistance.

Correct, got it, got it.

[Speaker 2] (2:06:37 - 2:06:42)

Christina lives in Toronto, Canada, and Skyping us from her family room. Christina, your question, hello.

[Speaker 9] (2:06:43 - 2:06:44)

Hi, Oprah, hi Akbar.

[Speaker 2] (2:06:44 - 2:06:45)

Hi.

[Speaker 9] (2:06:46 - 2:07:29)

I have been afraid to drive for about 16 years now. I was in a serious car accident, and it has stopped me from being responsible in my family life. My husband has so much burden.

He has to take our kids to their activities and so forth, take time off of work to take them to doctor's appointments. So my question is, but just recently from reading A New Earth, I've started to drive. So yay, but my question is, how do I remain in the inner spaciousness that you speak about on page 238, so that I can stay behind the wheel?

I mean, things are going well right now, but if that fear comes creeping back, how do I handle it?

[Speaker 2] (2:07:29 - 2:07:33)

I don't know if I want you behind the wheel if I'm on the road and you're trying to do that.

[Speaker 11] (2:07:33 - 2:07:34)

Oh, don't say that.

[Speaker 1] (2:07:34 - 2:09:38)

No, okay, okay. Well, first, you're now able to drive. That's wonderful.

The old fear is gone, but now a new fear has arisen, and that fear is about whether the fear is going to come back or not. And so that is often the case. People develop a fear about a fear.

Am I going to be in fear again? The mind tends to do that kind of thing because it projects itself into the future and says, am I going to remain fearless or is the fear going

to come back? So realize that that is your mind trying to figure something out and thereby creating a new level of fear on top of the original fear that has already dissolved.

So trust that it's not going to come back, but something you can do to help it is to actually consciously enjoy the driving and enjoy sitting in the car, enjoy sitting at the traffic light, enjoy the driving itself. I enjoy driving. It's a very peaceful thing to do for me.

So, and be comfortable with being in the car and what I used to do often in the, don't do it so much anymore, I would get into my car and drive out to some lonely place and sit in the car and meditate or write. I liked being in the car. So use the enjoyment.

The more you find the enjoyment, the less likely the fear is going to come back. So seek the enjoyment of, it is to do with enjoying the present moment, the driving itself, the movement and so on. And don't go into your mind, don't follow up that thought when it says, oh, is it going to last?

Is this state of being without fear going to last?

[Speaker 2] (2:09:38 - 2:09:39)

To stay in the moment.

[Speaker 1] (2:09:39 - 2:10:11)

Stay in the moment. The more you're in the moment, the less likely fear is going to come back. It can't really come back when you are in the now.

It's only when you leave the now, then it'll come back. Either you go into the past and you remember something that happened in the past, you've left the now, or you go into the future and say, am I going to have fear again at some point? So the more you stay in the now, the more you're keeping out fear.

Fear comes through past or future.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:13 - 2:10:22)

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Thank you. Okay, Yvonne. Okay, Yvonne.

Okay. Yes. Hi.

What's your question? I like this question.

[Speaker 5] (2:10:23 - 2:10:52)

It's about this two shall pass and the quote about it. Forget the quote now, shoot. How do you be a voice for change in the planet where things are going wrong and still be present in the stillness and create the action without being taken down by all the horrendous things that are happening?

It seems to me like a paradox to be present and then to work for change in the future.

[Speaker 2] (2:10:53 - 2:11:10)

Yeah, you said, how can I be a voice for planetary change and really say, I don't mind what happens because there's so much- I don't mind what happens. So much crazy stuff is going on in the world. How can you just say- Do not mind animal abuse.

Right, not mind animal abuse, not mind all the violence going on in the world and just say, this too shall pass.

[Speaker 1] (2:11:11 - 2:12:27)

First, of course, the English language has two expressions that are related and yet very different. Sometimes, I don't mind is interpreted by people as meaning I don't care. So I don't care and I don't mind are very different.

I don't mind does not mean that you don't care. It means there is a space of freedom inside you and that is a peaceful place. And unless you are rooted in that peaceful place within, you cannot ultimately be an agent for true positive change in this world.

Your state of consciousness is what transmits itself through whatever you do. Your state of consciousness is primary. And only if your state of consciousness is at peace can whatever you do reflect that.

And you can be a bringer of peace into this violent and insane world. And you can then, through whatever you do externally, can bring sanity into this logic insane world.

[Speaker 2] (2:12:27 - 2:12:40)

Whether it's about that particular thing you're concerned about or not, because if you are in a state of consciousness where you are at peace, everything that you do in the world will bring peace to the world. And that's how you change the world.

[Speaker 1] (2:12:40 - 2:13:07)

Yes, and everything you do will be much more empowered. It will be empowered by that consciousness rather than coming from antagonism, coming from the thinking I have to fight these people, making situations or people into enemies. That's all the old consciousness.

You cannot change this world through the old consciousness or applying the structures and the ways of the old consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (2:13:07 - 2:13:25)

Yeah, one of the things you shared with us earlier, what he was saying, Yvonne, in one of the early classes is that you cannot make change by fighting against anything. And a surefire way of knowing that something is going to fail is when you say it's the war against. The war against anything cannot win.

[Speaker 1] (2:13:25 - 2:13:49)

No. So if you cannot fight, it does not mean that you cannot take action. You can take powerful action, but it comes out of that basic place of inner peace.

People don't realize, many people don't realize yet that very powerful action come out of the place of inner peace. They believe they need to be agitated to bring about change.

[Speaker 5] (2:13:51 - 2:14:11)

Coming from inner peace, motivate other people to sort of mind what's going on so that they might do things differently in their lives that impact the planet as a whole. That's the thing that kind of worries me, that the concept can give people apathy and like, oh, I'm going to throw my cigarette on the ground and it's going to go into the ocean and I don't mind what happens.

[Speaker 1] (2:14:12 - 2:14:30)

No, that's not it. You see the consequences of any action. If you're present, then you will not do unconscious things that actually produce suffering.

It's only when you're not present that you will produce suffering in one form or another.

[Speaker 2] (2:14:31 - 2:14:31)

Got that.

[Speaker 1] (2:14:31 - 2:15:15)

When you're present, you do not generate suffering for yourself or others. It's the only place from where you don't generate suffering. And then you are already the beginning of the change of the world.

And then it doesn't matter what you do, you may just disseminate information, but the information to make people aware of certain things. Some people, this can be a very important thing to do. And the way in which you disseminate the information will also be empowered by your state of consciousness.

It will not make others wrong, other people wrong, and thereby produce a reaction. And then you're trapped in the same old thing.

[Speaker 2] (2:15:15 - 2:15:38)

You've experienced that, right, Ivan? You've been on the street and somebody is trying to hand out something. And if it's a person who's really agitated or you can feel or sense their anger and agitation, you don't wanna take the pamphlet.

But if the person hands it to you or whatever it is with a sense of calm or peace, then you're more inclined to wanna even engage with them.

[Speaker 5] (2:15:38 - 2:16:06)

I've experienced that as myself, like 15 years ago in college, being the staunch environmentalist and telling people what to do. And of course, watching them do the opposite, inspiring the exact opposite that I wanted. So I've worked the last 10 years since the power of the now to be present.

But in order to do that, I had to like stop looking at the atrocities of the world. And now I'm ready to come back and I want to keep the spiritual side, but at the same time, not let the world get me down, but be able to do something and be a part of positive change.

[Speaker 1] (2:16:06 - 2:16:24)

That's your challenge now. That's your challenge now. And your spiritual practice now is to balance the two so that you can be active and bring about change in the world without losing your rootedness in being and your presence.

So that's a balancing act.

[Speaker 5] (2:16:24 - 2:16:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (2:16:25 - 2:16:26)

And that's what you have to do now.

[Speaker 5] (2:16:26 - 2:16:43)

Thank you for sharing how to do it. I'm learning slowly what you just said about accepting the acceptance, the deep acceptance of the world as it is. That hit me finally.

I'm starting to understand the depth and not the accept of it's okay, just that this is happening.

[Speaker 2] (2:16:44 - 2:16:49)

That it is happening. Yes. And that the angrier you're more upset you get about it, it's still happening.

[Speaker 5] (2:16:50 - 2:16:59)

Oh yeah. That doesn't serve anything. I get that.

But then how do you keep going? But it's a slow process. There's two more weeks, two more chapters.

I'm hoping.

[Speaker 2] (2:17:00 - 2:17:19)

Thanks. Inner purpose is going to help that a lot. Thank you.

Tell Nick to be sure to show up for inner purpose. I got a few things to say. Thanks everybody.

Natalie lives in Australia, but is on holiday with her family and is Skyping us from her friend's kitchen in England. Hi, Natalie.

[Speaker 6] (2:17:19 - 2:17:21)

Hi, Oprah. Hi, Oprah. How are you?

[Speaker 2] (2:17:22 - 2:17:23)

We're both well. Thank you.

[Speaker 6] (2:17:24 - 2:18:25)

This is so exciting for me. On page 239 in your book, you say that some people feel more alive when they travel and visit unfamiliar places or foreign countries because those times sense perceptions, experiencing takes up more of their consciousness than thinking. Since the class on the third chapter, I've been sharing an amazing holiday with my family and our friends here.

I've been able to enjoy my holiday so much more by practicing the teachings that I've read about in the book and the things I've learned from the class. But my life back home is not like my holiday. It's really busy.

I've got a job and three children and my husband has his own business. And on reflection, I think I've filled up any free time I've had so that I wasn't alone with that constant noise in my head. I feel really great at the moment and I want to feel the same

when I go home.

So my question is, how do I transition between this wonderful holiday and go back to my normal life at home?

[Speaker 1] (2:18:28 - 2:20:09)

Okay, okay. That's a good question. Yes, yes.

Thank you. Yes, it's a good question. The everydayness of many people's lives can really pull you into a place of unconsciousness because the repetitiveness of one's life.

So it's up to you when you get home to invite a different state of consciousness as much as possible into your daily life, into the daily routine of your life. Invite a state of presence when you are engaged in things that you do every day repetitively, things that usually are a means to an end, driving those kids to school, going, doing the shopping, doing, you can see how many things are a means to an end in one's daily existence. And that's not a very powerful way to live when almost everything you do in your daily existence is a means to some end because you have to do this and this.

So bring in presence where, instead of treating whatever you do as a means to an end, as much as possible, make it into an end in itself. For example, when you're driving from here to there, be absolutely present every moment. Look around, be alert as if you were seeing things for the first time, the trees, the people, the traffic.

[Speaker 2] (2:20:09 - 2:20:11)

And you do that by not labeling things.

[Speaker 1] (2:20:11 - 2:20:41)

Not labeling mentally what you're experiencing. Be there as a conscious presence when you're doing shopping at the supermarket. Perceiving without naming is what you are.

Perceiving without naming. Be there with every step, look at the things around you, what do I need to get? To be conscious of every movement, of everything around you so that it's not an everyday thing.

It's that everything that you do is happening just now. It's not a repetition.

[Speaker 2] (2:20:42 - 2:21:53)

And I promise you, if you start to do this in your everyday life, what he says on page 252, as much as possible in everyday life, use awareness of the inner body to start to create space. When waiting, when listening to someone, when pausing to look at the sky, all on page 252, a tree, a flower, your partner or child, feel the aliveness within at the same

time. This means part of your attention or consciousness remains formless and the rest is available for the outer world of form.

Whenever you inhabit your body in this way, it serves as an anchor for staying present in the now, prevents you from losing yourself in thinking, in emotions or in external situations. When you really get that, what he's saying on page 252, Natalie, everything around you takes on a magical quality. I can really testify to that, that just doing routine things becomes almost like you have wow moments doing the smallest things, washing the- I've been feeling that at the moment because we've been seeing so many amazing things and meeting so many different people and being in places where they speak different languages.

[Speaker 6] (2:21:53 - 2:22:03)

But I know at home, what I do is when I'm doing something, I'm thinking about the next thing that I'm going to be doing. So I really need to, I can really take that on. Thank you so much.

[Speaker 2] (2:22:03 - 2:22:38)

What I would like to say to you and everybody else, when you start to put this into practice, and I've been doing it myself during the past eight weeks, when you start to actually put it into practice, everything is amazing. Everything starts to be amazing. The fact that you're breathing in and out of your lungs starts to be amazing.

That's what the now does. It brings you into a level of consciousness and presence. So just being is amazing.

And you don't have to leave home to experience that. Isn't that the- That's right.

[Speaker 1] (2:22:38 - 2:22:39)

That's the key, isn't it? Yes, that's the key, yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:22:40 - 2:22:45)

What is on the back board? I thought I saw my name there when there was a wide shot there. Does that say Oprah?

[Speaker 6] (2:22:46 - 2:22:54)

That's from my Georgie. She's asleep because it's about 3 a.m., but she wanted to say hi, so that's her hi, Oprah. Hi, Georgie.

[Speaker 2] (2:22:55 - 2:23:20)

Hi. Thank you. Thank you very much, Natalie.

But that's- Bye, thank you. Thank you. What Natalie was talking about is the whole point of awakening to your life's purpose.

And next week, we're gonna be talking about inner purpose, which is what I was trying to say to Nick, maybe too stridently. It's happened a couple times where I'm like saying to Gail, Gail will say, I don't understand.

[Speaker 1] (2:23:20 - 2:23:28)

I'll go, well, the reason is- Well, Nick represents about 50 million other people who are the same.

[Speaker 2] (2:23:28 - 2:24:09)

That's right, who are feeling that, well, listen, I gotta make money. I gotta make money. But what we're gonna be talking about next week, Nick, is when you align the inner purpose and let the inner purpose determine what your outer actions are, then you're not worried.

That's right. You never worry. No matter how much money you're making, you're not worried because you're on purpose with your life.

You're on purpose with your life. Yeah, well, I think a lot of people feel like this is all kind of, sometimes they feel like this is ooey gooey stuff. And yes, and I'll get spiritual, but let me make some money first.

Yeah, I wanna be spiritual and all that, but I gotta make some money first.

[Speaker 1] (2:24:09 - 2:24:18)

Yeah, that's actually in the New Testament where he says, let me first do this. They invite you to the kingdom of heaven.

[Speaker 2] (2:24:18 - 2:24:18)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (2:24:19 - 2:24:29)

Let me first do this with another excuse. Let me first do this. First, I have to do this.

Yes. Then I'll be ready. Of course, it never happens.

That's right. The then never comes.

[Speaker 2] (2:24:30 - 2:24:45)

So there is Barbara in Shanghai, China, who writes, I find it really difficult to be the

observer of a challenging work environment, especially when I'm frustrated with employees and have to discipline my staff. What are some of the practical steps I can take to overcome the situation?

[Speaker 1] (2:24:47 - 2:26:02)

Well, there you use whatever the practical things that are described in the book, conscious, one or two conscious breaths as often as possible, getting in touch with the feeling of the inner body, the aliveness of the inner body while you are listening to people, especially, then already a different energy is there. You are listening from a different state of consciousness when you're in touch with the inner body, especially while you listen. Right.

And a lot of thing, a person who is running an office or whatever our questioner does, they probably have to deal with many people every day, which involves listening to people in addition to, of course, speaking to people. So be there as the, feel the aliveness within as you listen, as much as possible, take conscious breaths while you are engaged in things. That's right.

Bringing spaces, little spaces into your daily existence. Gaps. Little gaps.

That is more important than doing, it's wonderful to do a meditation at the end of the day, but bringing little gaps into your everyday activities is even more important.

[Speaker 2] (2:26:02 - 2:27:17)

I love what you talk about on page 232 and 233. You tell people to avoid watching television programs and commercials that assault you with a rapid succession of images that change every two or three seconds. Rather than watching at random, choose the programs you wanna see whenever you remember to do so, feel the aliveness also inside your body as you watch.

Alternatively, be aware of your breathing from time to time, looking away from the screen at regular intervals so that it doesn't completely take possession of your visual sense. We just did a show the other day and this mom, it was a show about giving up what you'd be willing to live without. And this family was gonna give up their computers or they did give up their computers and their televisions for a week.

And their little five-year-old boy was crying because he had to give up the computer. His mom walked in the room, stood behind him, was behind him, called his name and he still couldn't hear her because he was so mesmerized by the video game he was playing. What are we doing to ourselves and more importantly to our children through the video games, the television, which is a form of like hypnosis almost for people.

[Speaker 1] (2:27:17 - 2:27:47)

Yes, and it pulls your attention out of the body. It's like a leaking, an energy leakage, especially for young children when the energy gets drawn out very easily. So it's continuous energy leakage and they cannot focus on, because of the rapidly changing images on TV screen in many programs, the ability to have a prolonged focus on something is greatly diminished.

[Speaker 2] (2:27:47 - 2:27:54)

Well, I thought that, that's why we have so many children with ADD because they've grown up in a world where they can only, there's 30 seconds, 30 seconds and 30 seconds.

[Speaker 1] (2:27:54 - 2:28:38)

Yes, that means the quality of your life is also diminished because the quality of your life very much depends on the degree of your attention. Attention is quality. So if you cannot give attention to anything for very long, that diminishes the quality of your life and what you can do.

So parents need to be careful with their children. I'm not saying remove all these things immediately from your children because they are addictive, but very gently don't reduce the amount of time they spend with video games and they reduce gently the amount of time they spend watching television.

[Speaker 2] (2:28:38 - 2:28:54)

Because they cause you, as you say, so when watching television, the tendencies for you to fall below thought, not rise above it. Television has this in common with alcohol and certain other drugs. While it provides some relief from your mind, you again pay a high price, loss of consciousness.

[Speaker 1] (2:28:54 - 2:28:54)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:28:54 - 2:29:03)

And here we have- That's what it's designed to do, isn't it? For the most part. Yes, it's, here we have- Our show though is designed to make you more conscious.

I will have to say that.

[Speaker 1] (2:29:03 - 2:29:18)

I know that. When I wrote there somewhere, there are some television shows that have been helpful to many people and have raised people's consciousness. It says that

somewhere in the book.

It does. I saw you in my mental, in my mind.

[Speaker 2] (2:29:18 - 2:29:33)

Thank you. You could have just said, oh, the Oprah show. Yes, I saw you wrote that there are some television shows.

You could have just put in parentheses, the Oprah show, for example. Yes. Yeah, but for the most part, television is designed to numb us out.

[Speaker 1] (2:29:33 - 2:30:10)

Yes. And here we have the interesting concept of rising above thinking and falling below thinking. So what we are engaged in here, now most people are at the thinking level.

They are controlled by their mind. They are identified with their mind. This work that we are doing here, if you can call it work, it's not work really, is rising above thinking.

Being present means you have risen above thinking. You are fully conscious, but there's little or no thought activity.

[Speaker 2] (2:30:10 - 2:30:28)

Can you tell me why you say on page 233, make sure you don't go to sleep immediately after switching off the set, or even worse, fall asleep with the set still on? I know my friend Gail sometimes is watching TV and she goes, I don't know if I was watching or my feet were watching because she goes to sleep with the TV on.

[Speaker 1] (2:30:29 - 2:31:05)

So then all the turmoil that you've just been watching and you've just spent a significant amount of time below thought in a state of unawareness and unconsciousness, and if you go from, that will affect the quality of your sleep and you will notice also when you wake up in the morning, you won't be as refreshed. It's vital to go into sleep from a place of consciousness rather than unconsciousness. Then the quality of your sleep will be much better and you will wake up feeling renewed.

[Speaker 2] (2:31:06 - 2:31:14)

I noticed that. See, I don't watch television before going to bed. Hardly watch television at all, but I noticed that if I meditate before going to sleep, I have a better sleep.

[Speaker 1] (2:31:15 - 2:32:05)

Yes, and what I recommend to people is as they lie in bed, ready to go to sleep, lie on

your back, flat on your back, and bring attention, scan your body with your attention from your feet to your head, your hands, your arms, and then feel the internal aliveness of the body as you lie there. You lie in the energy field of your body. That means there's also very little or no thinking going on because the attention moves into the body.

And there, from there, you go to sleep. Hold that for five, 10 minutes. It's a very pleasant way of saying goodbye to that day and of going into sleep.

It feels very much alive. It's joyful, actually, to lie there in that energy field.

[Speaker 2] (2:32:05 - 2:32:18)

And that energy field that you're talking about is exactly what this whole chapter is about, is the energy field of inner space. Go inside the body and allow yourself to be the observer of the body.

[Speaker 1] (2:32:18 - 2:32:44)

Yes, and then you connect with the energy. You merge the energy field. And of course, the body is mostly empty space, 99.999% empty space. Physicists tell us the space between the molecules, the atoms that make up the body, the spaces in between the atoms is so vast that your body is 99.999% empty space.

[Speaker 2] (2:32:47 - 2:33:23)

That's a lot for my brain to take in right now. But I do wanna thank you for joining us. This eighth class will be available on demand tomorrow for free here at oprah.com.

And if you wanna download or watch any of our classes, you can do that tomorrow, also at oprah.com and iTunes. It's free because of the generous support of nature-made soft gel vitamins. This week, you can update your workbook, get ready for our next class, chapter nine.

We're coming to the end. Your inner purpose, your inner purpose. For all of you who read this book, looking for your inner purpose, this is what it's all about, people.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (2:33:23 - 2:33:23)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:33:24 - 2:33:38)

For bringing us into inner space. Next week is inner purpose. And as I was saying to Nick earlier, inner purpose, when it defines what you do in the world, put you in alignment and all things come.

As they should.

[Speaker 1] (2:33:38 - 2:33:41)

And then there comes the alignment of inner purpose and outer purpose.

[Speaker 2] (2:33:43 - 2:33:55)

That's it. Thanks, everybody. Good night.

Let's do our high five. We almost didn't do it last week and people complained. Bye, everybody.

Bye. Bye.